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ABSTRACT

What will schools look like in the future? What big trends are most influential in shaping education and how might these unfold in coming years? What policy questions need to be tackled today for desirable pathways into the future to become more likely? Four chapters in part 1 address these questions. Chapter 1 examines the "driving forces" in the wider environment of schooling, reviewing key economic, social, cultural, and policy trends, and discussing some of their educational implications. Chapter 2 focuses more closely on developments in educational systems and schools themselves. Chapter 3 present scenarios constructed through the "Schooling for Tomorrow" project for school systems over the next 10 to 20 years, grouped into "status quo," "re-schooling," and "de-schooling" futures. Chapter 4 reviews the main arguments, identifies implications for lifelong learning, and identifies questions for and tensions among the policies for the long-term development of schooling. Part 2 consists of contributions from eight international experts who look with different perspectives at the challenges facing schools today and tomorrow. Both parts conclude with a list of references. (Author/RT)

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What Schools for the Future?

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What Schools for the Future?

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Foreword

The origins of this volume lie in a meeting of OECD Ministers of Education convened in 1996 in Paris (OECD, 1996*a*). Their theme was "lifelong learning for all". The analysis, discussion and conclusions all pointed forcefully to the key role of schooling in the overall panoply of lifelong learning opportunities, which had previously suffered relative neglect compared with the part played by the different sectors of continuing education and training. Specifically, the Ministers invited the OECD to "assess alternative visions of the 'school of tomorrow'", an invitation which has led directly to the analysis of trends and scenarios in this report.

However, the ways in which schools can make their most effective contribution to the "lifelong learning for all" objective are still ill-understood. Moreover, forward-looking methodologies have been developed in only rudimentary fashion in education compared with many other sectors. This work had thus to begin with fundamental questions rather than a well-established body of analysis. What will schools look like in the future? What big trends are most influential in shaping education and how might these unfold in coming years? What policy questions need to be tackled today for desirable pathways into the future to become more likely?

These are the questions addressed in Part I. Chapter 1 examines the "driving forces" in the wider environment of schooling, reviewing key economic, social, cultural and policy trends and discussing some of their educational implications. Chapter 2 focuses more closely on developments in education systems and schools themselves. Chapter 3 presents the scenarios constructed through this project for school systems over the next 10-20 years – six are presented, grouped into "status quo", "re-schooling" and "de-schooling" futures. Chapter 4 concludes the Secretariat Report. It reviews the main arguments, identifies implications for lifelong learning, and identifies questions for, and tensions among, the policies for the long-term development of schooling. Part II complements the Secretariat Report with eight chapters contributed by experts from Europe, North America and the Pacific area at different stages of the "Schooling for Tomorrow" project.

The work has been implemented through a series of seminars and events since the original Hiroshima conference that launched the "Schooling for Tomorrow" project in November 1997 (which resulted in the 1999 *Innovating Schools* publi-

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cation).[1] The international OECD/Netherlands seminar held in Scheveningen in April 1998 provided a valuable forum of discussion as well as a couple of the expert papers included in Part II. In October 1999, OECD/CERI was a partner in the L'*École Horizon* 2020 ("The School in 2020") conference held in Poitiers, France. A small expert seminar on forward-looking methodologies was convened in *Futuribles* headquarters in February 2000. There were two meetings of invited experts in OECD headquarters in 1999 and 2000 that both brainstormed ideas and reviewed progress. At regular intervals throughout, the work has profited from the valuable advice of the CERI Governing Board.

One of the most important events during this phase of the project has been the major international OECD/Netherlands conference on "Schooling for Tomorrow" that took place in Rotterdam in November 2000, chaired by former Swedish Minister of Education, Ms. Ylva Johansson. This event allowed *inter alia* for a day's discussion of trends and scenarios by two working groups. The views of the participants were surveyed as to the desirability and likelihood of the different scenarios (see Chapter 12).

Within the OECD, there has been close co-operation with the International Futures Advisory Group to the Secretary-General (its four recent publications on the economy, technology, society and governance in the 21th century are referred to in Riel Miller's chapter).

Since the Rotterdam event, the OECD Ministers of Education have convened again in Paris (April 2001), this time on the broad theme "Investing in Competencies for All". The results of the "Schooling for Tomorrow" project were reported back to the Ministers as a response to their initial request for this analysis at their previous 1996 meeting.[2] These results also informed the ministerial discussion paper.

Drawing on the inputs of many colleagues, the discussions held at the different conferences and meetings, and the expert papers reproduced in Part II and other technical reports, the main author within the OECD Secretariat was David Istance. The volume is published on the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD.

1. Parallel work on innovation has been carried out under the "Schooling for Tomorrow" project, including a seminar on networks in Lisbon, September 2000 and the main Rotterdam conference held six weeks later. The project has also generated a major activity on ICT and the Quality of Learning [publications to date are *Learning to Bridge the Digital Divide* (2000) and *E-Learning: The Partnership Challenge* (2001)].
2. Chapter 5, "What Future for our Schools?", in Education Policy Analysis, 2001 Edition (OECD, 2001a).

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Thanks are also due to those who organised or hosted the seminars/conferences. In France, *Futuribles International* hosted an expert seminar (Paris, February 2000), and they were co-organisers, with EPICE (*Institut Européen pour la Promotion de l'Innovation et de la Culture dans l'Éducation*), of a conference held in Poitiers (October 1999). Two "Schooling for Tomorrow" events were held in the Netherlands: in Scheveningen (April 1998) and Rotterdam (November 2000). These were organised with OECD by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science and, for the latter conference, by the Rotterdam municipal authorities. Our thanks are extended to all these organisers, with a particular acknowledgement of the contribution made by the Netherlands Ministry officials, Jan van Ravens and Marceline Engelkes.

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Table of Contents

Part I
REPORT BY THE SECRETARIAT

Chapter 1. **The Wider Environment of Schooling: Deep Trends and Driving Forces** 13
Introduction 13
Childhood, generational issues and the ageing society 14
Gender and family 21
Knowledge, technology and work 27
Lifestyles, consumption and inequality 38
The geo-political dimension – International, national, local 46

Chapter 2. **Schooling Developments and Issues** 59
Introduction 59
Robust school systems 59
Towards schools as learning organisations? 64
Evaluation, assessment and certification 68
Teachers and teacher policies 70

Chapter 3. **Scenarios for the Future of Schooling** 77
Introduction 77
The OECD schooling scenarios 78
The "status quo extrapolated" 79
The "re-schooling" scenarios 85
The "de-schooling" scenarios 91
Concluding remarks 97

Chapter 4. **Overview: Policy Goals, Tensions, Questions** 99
Overview of key points 99
Schools and competences for lifelong learning 101
Goals, functions and tensions 103
Policy questions and the scenarios 106

References (*Part I*) 111

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Part II

THE EXPERT PAPERS

Chapter 5. **Work, Society, Family and Learning for the Future** *by* Martin Carnoy 119
Introduction 119
Crisis in the relationships between work and society 120
Work, networks and learning 122
The family and household 125
The reconstruction of community in the information age 128
The key role of the state 130

Chapter 6. **A New Challenge to Social Cohesion? Emerging Risk Profiles in OECD Countries** *by* Gosta Esping-Andersen 135
Introduction 135
Services and employment 136
The emerging risk structure 139
Exclusion and social integration 142
Conclusions 143

Chapter 7. **21st Century Transitions: Opportunities, Risks and Strategies for Governments and Schools** *by* Riel Miller 147
Introduction 147
The opportunities and risks of 21st century transitions 148
Government policies for encouraging desirable 21st century transitions 151
The implications of 21st century transitions for schools in OECD countries 152
Conclusion 155

Chapter 8. **The Driving Forces for Schooling Tomorrow: Insights from Studies in Four Countries** *by* Hans F. van Aalst 157
Introduction 157
Canada (Ontario): "For the Love of Learning" 158
Germany (North-Rhine-Westphalia): "The future of education, schools of the future" 162
Japan: "The model for Japanese education in the perspective of the 21st century" 166
The Netherlands: "Futures for basic educational policies" 169
Reflections on the driving forces and their implications 172

Chapter 9. **Attitudes and Expectations in Relation to Schools: Swedish Findings and Some International Comparisons** *by* Sten Söderberg 177
Introduction 177
Public opinion towards schools and education 178
Parental views 183
The media and other influences shaping opinions on schools 187
Consensus and conflict in the politics of schooling 188

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Schools, working life and the labour market 189
Inter-generational issues and taxpayer attitudes towards schools 190
The position of different socio-cultural groups and the aims and operation of schools 191
Conclusions 192
Annex 195

Chapter 10. **A New Century and the Challenges it Brings for Young People: How Might Schools Support Youth in the Future?** *by* Kerry J. Kennedy 203
Introduction 203
Contexts and conditions of the youth landscape 204
Characteristics of the youth landscape 210
Schools for tomorrow 211
Conclusion 215

Chapter 11. **Schools for an Emerging New World** *by* Alain Michel 217
Introduction 217
The virtual global village and a new regionalism and localism 217
New expectations for schooling 219
The new imperatives of effectiveness and equity 220
Decentralisation and steering 222
The education system as a learning organisation, change as a systemic process 223
Educational research emphasises the key role of the local level 224
How far to develop the territorial dimension in education policy? 225
From "education priority areas" to "education priority networks" (1982-1999) 227
Local community, the nation-state, and Europe 229

Chapter 12. **Visions of Decision-makers and Educators for the Future of Schools – Reactions to the OECD Scenarios** *by* Walo Hutmacher 231
Introduction 231
Views expressed on the likelihood and desirability of the different scenarios 231
Summary and discussion of the results 235
Perspectives on the future 240

References (*Part* II) 243

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Part I

REPORT BY THE SECRETARIAT

Chapter 1

The Wider Environment of Schooling: Deep Trends and Driving Forces

Introduction

This report begins with a broad survey of the major trends that set the environment in which schools will be shaped into the future. The trends reviewed are drawn from a number of the fields – economic, social, political, cultural, environmental – that are closest to the world of schools and schooling. Such a presentation is not meant to imply that these wider trends define agendas to which the educational world must simply react. Yet impact they undoubtedly do on the world of education, shaping its nature, outcomes, and the agenda of aims for tomorrow.

The features and trends presented are necessarily selective from the manifest complexity of the world of today and tomorrow. The complexity is compounded as not all trends point in the same direction, and sometimes conflict in terms of their impact on, and the agenda they set for, schooling. On some aspects, countries share similar basic developments, on others there are clear differences, even growing divergences. The aim in this chapter is to identify the "deep" factors and driving forces, rather than the more short-term aspects that tend to grab media attention.

The discussion of the wider environment of schools, together with the educational issues and trends of Chapter 2 are essentially historical as they are based on visible developments. Certain questions they raise for the future are identified. The trends in turn inform the scenarios for schooling presented in Chapter 3, where the perspective shifts from past and present to possible futures. The Secretariat report concludes in Chapter 4 with a recapitulation

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and discussion of the key emerging points, the policy questions and dilemmas these give rise to, and conclusions about avenues for further exploration in clarifying the school of the future.

Childhood, generational issues and the ageing society

Childhood in the 20th and into the 21st centuries

Too often, discussion about schooling for the future is divorced from consideration of the nature of childhood and youth in today's societies. Social historians at least since Aries (1973) have shown how the very nature of "childhood", far from being a given across time and cultures, is shaped by the particular circumstances of each era. This is easy to overlook, because our ways of organising childhood seem so natural.[1] Another reason for overlooking the nature of childhood may be the perception that it changes so slowly as to be, in effect, a given for the foreseeable future. This would be an unwise assumption as the status of childhood is currently subject to powerful pressures on a number of fronts.

Schools at the core of structures for childhood

Schools lie at the heart of these arrangements and of modern notions of "childhood", even if other sources of influence – TV and computer games perhaps, or the peer group – seem to exercise a more attractive pull for large numbers of young people. Organised schooling is in essence the compulsory cloistering of young people from a very early age into specialist educative institutions, characterised by their distinctiveness from adult life. The benefits of compelling this experience on all young people – benefits that are seen to accrue to society and to the young person and their families, now and in the future – are widely agreed to justify any costs incurred by the loss of freedom that compulsory attendance entails. Norms for staying on in education have continually been pushed back to older and older ages, delaying the onset of recognised "adult life" and extending the cloistering process.

The distinctiveness of "childhood" as a phase has been reinforced by other long-term trends, regulating, for instance, the ages when paid work, sexual activity, and family

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formation can begin, each strongly justified in terms of personal protection and the avoidance of exclusion. Early pregnancy/childbirth, far from being regarded as a norm, has come to be seen as a major social problem to be rectified. The long-term employment shifts, particularly the shift away from agriculture and other primary industries with its concomitant impact on communities, have served to distance work from the lives of the young, though some return to home-based work may in part reverse this trend.

"Extended adolescence"

The delayed process of entering fully into adult life can be described as "extended adolescence". The analysis prepared for the 1998 meeting of OECD social policy ministers described young people "deferring both marriage and childbirth until they can achieve economic autonomy – and this is taking longer" (OECD, 1999*a*, p. 16). The OECD work on transitions from school to working life has analysed the rapidity of this set of changes to suggest that between 1990 and 1996 the duration of young people's initial transition to working life grew by an average of nearly two years (OECD, 2000*d*). This is indeed very rapid and substantial change, raising the question of the limits of its continuation. How far are more flexible mixes of learning and work already emerging, especially as broader developments in the economic, society and lifelong learning argue for greater flexibility instead of an increasingly rigid age segmentation into different life phases? However desirable, the facts underpinning "extended adolescence" warn that such flexibility cannot at present be assumed.

Tensions and pressures for change

With the extension of childhood and adolescence, tensions are introduced that may prove substantial enough to force new departures. For instance, the delay in acquisition of adult status, reinforced by the deteriorating labour market position of young people, stands in contrast to the earlier onset of puberty and sexual activity [around a third of 15-year-olds in a number of countries participating in a recent WHO survey report to having had sexual intercourse (WHO, 2000)]. Another example is that children and young people have become extremely powerful forces in the "adult world" as consumers, and are being carefully targeted

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in corporate marketing strategies. This is occurring at the time that their acquisition of full autonomy over their own resources is being delayed. A related set of concerns arises in relation to disaffection, even violence, within schools that have been designed for children yet must cater for young people with greater maturity and a wider range of out-of-school experiences. Prout (2000) advances the hypothesis that a growing gap is emerging in which public institutions are increasingly concerned with the control of children, while the private sphere is where children are more allowed to "express choice, exercise autonomy, and work at their individual self-realisation". To the extent that this gap is growing and that the school belongs firmly in the public domain, it may prove increasingly difficult to maintain legitimacy and student motivation.

Ageing societies

The "greying" of OECD societies

However, some of the most important pressures are being exerted from changes taking place at the other end of the age spectrum; questions relating to intergenerational relationships and segmentation cannot be understood apart from the ageing of societies. By 1999, the proportion of under-15s has fallen to less than 1 in 5 of total national populations in as many as 22 of the OECD countries, with only Mexico and Turkey significantly above this level. In 1960, in no OECD country was it as low as this. For the first time, the proportions of over 65s are beginning to approach those of the under-15s, and had reached 15% or more in 13 OECD countries (Figure 1.1). In short, our societies are "greying".

The "dependency ratios" – the numbers in the economically "non-active" to "active" populations – continue to go up linked both to ageing populations and to "extended adolescence". One proxy for this is in the comparison of the 15-64 age group with the combined numbers of under 15s and over 65s.[2] Over the longer term, the ageing of populations and rising "dependency" are set to continue:

> "Population ageing means that OECD countries are at the end of a period which saw a steady increase in the share of 15-64 year-olds in the total population. Dependency

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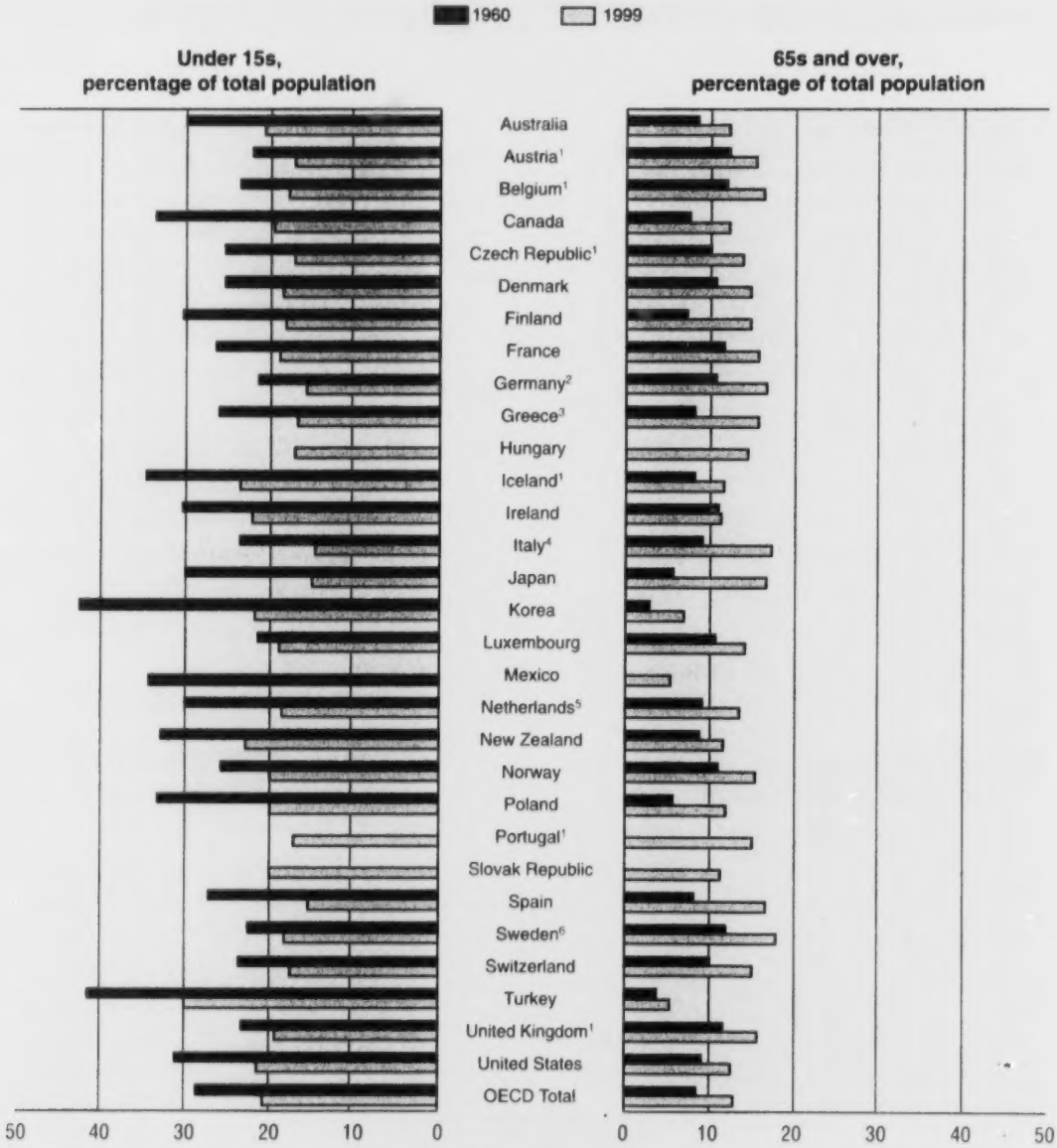
Figure 1.1. **Age structure of OECD countries under 15 and 65 and over, 1960 and 1999**



1. 1998.
2. Former West Germany only.
3. 1996.
4. Under 14.
5. 1997.
6. Under 16.

Source: OECD (2001*b*).

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ratios in most countries are set to rise over the next 30 years, with some countries showing particularly sharp increases after 2010. In countries which are relatively young (*e.g.* Mexico), dependency ratios are still high but are projected to fall (OECD, 1999*a*, pp. 13-14)."

Growing "dependency ratios" and pressures for change

The growing dependency ratio could well be influential in leading to re-thinking the squeeze of the "active" generation into an ever-tighter age range in the middle of people's lives. The impact on public finances – increased calls on the expenditure purse unmatched by growth in the tax-paying base – could add to the social and/or educational arguments for re-examining the wisdom of the continued extension of adolescence. The evidence suggests that these are long-term changes, as it is only by 2020 and especially 2030 that very significant differences will be apparent from today. When those years are reached, however, the changes promise to be on such a scale as to have been anticipated by policy strategies well before then (see Visco, 2001).

New inter-generational relations?

The generation gap, a perennial – but new inter-generational forces at play

It is a perennial of educational and social debate that each "older" generation regards the habits of youth as a worrying break with the past. Kennedy in this volume (Chapter 10) describes this as a tradition to be traced back at least to Plato, and appearing with regularity over the past century. Habits of speech, dress, and social activities by the young contain an element of "shock value" that often do just this, and help to establish independence from parents and schools while reinforcing peer-group inclusion. Yet, the aims of many of the young tend to be very conventional, with similar aspirations to their parents – so much indeed that a common complaint from the ageing baby-boom generation is that younger adults are altogether too conventional.

If these tensions are perennials, is there any evidence that the current generation of young people has entered into qualitatively different relationships with their elders than in the past? There are certainly some grounds for reflection

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about generational relationships to inform thinking about schooling in the future.

The "Nintendo Generation"

One reason for this lies in the nature of learning and knowledge experienced by the "Nintendo Generation". A new argument is that this sets them increasingly apart from the world of schools and adults in terms not only of culture but of cognitive development. On this view, many young people have developed competences and approaches through their facility with ICT that find such poor reflection in their schooling as to reinforce distance and disenchantment. Michel in this volume (Chapter 11) also expresses concern about "zapping and surfing rather than the search for knowledge". As yet, however, firm evidence is lacking on the extent to which new cognitive processes are being developed through computer games etc., and, to the extent they are, whether this is a matter of urgency either for the young or for schools. There is thus a host of unanswered questions relating to the "Nintendo Generation" calling for more profound reflection.

Negotiation with young replacing compulsion

Further grounds for reflecting whether inter-generational relations are entering new waters lie in the "contracts" that bind schools, parents and students. Over the latter decades of the 20th century, compulsion and regulation for the young have given way on many fronts to negotiation and consensus-seeking. The abolition of corporal punishment in many countries – in schools and, to an increasing extent, in homes as well – is one tangible indicator of this change. The establishment in some countries of rights for children to sue their own parents can equally be seen as a step of significance in recasting relations between the generations. Changes in discipline and rule-enforcement would be among the most noticeable shifts in school life and socialisation to strike someone revisiting today's world from the past. A question arising for the future is how far traditional organisational models and school ethos will prove untenable because of these broader cultural shifts.

Lack of civic interest

A third possible "generational" shift concerns the lack of engagement by many young in the civic fabric of society.

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Kennedy describes one international study and the pessimism expressed by the researchers in the results:

> Hahn (1998) investigated students' political values and understandings in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[3] Students were asked to report on their levels of political trust, experiences and interest, their confidence and views on political efficacy and their future civic participation. The researcher's own words are unambiguous: "the questionnaire responses are quite dismal... the depth of students' political cynicism (...) is troubling" (p. 31).

Individualism and sustainability – the role of schools in fostering sustainable experiences and values

Robert Putnam's most recent analysis of social capital (2000) – the "Bowling Alone" thesis about individualism, fragmentation and isolation in modern society – contends that there has been a clear generational shift. In his view, recent cohorts are less inclined to join, volunteer, engage politically or socially, or trust others than did earlier generations. This is not specific to the the young in school as it refers equally to their parents. This is a recent and controversial analysis, and the OECD/CERI work on human and social capital has concluded that, outside the US and Australia, the evidence is not compelling that engagement has declined in quantitative terms. It may well be, however, that the terms of that engagement are shifting to more individualistic and transient activities (OECD, 2001*d*). A question that then needs addressing is whether the spread and depth of individualism means that at some time the very sustainability of society will come into question. If it might, an obvious question for schools as key social institutions is what role they might play to foster more sustainable experiences and values.

The power of the retired as a political force – supportive of schools?

A final generational issue for this section concerns the growing numbers and relative prosperity of the retired in OECD societies. Söderberg in this volume (Chapter 9) summarises Swedish data on attitudes held by different age groups towards schools, and finds that a qualitative break in attitude occurs between the over- and under-65 year-olds (as this is the case in Sweden, with its strong tradition of support for public services, even greater age differences might be found elsewhere). In judgements of how well

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schools succeed in reaching their objectives, the youngest age group with the most recent experience of schools was the most, and the oldest age group the least, positive. Not only is distance from schools' activities greater for the elderly, and their perceptions of relevance lower, but the importance of other public services, particularly health, understandably receive a higher priority.

Clearly, such a summary is far from conclusive for OECD societies in general, and in itself holds no surprises. What is noteworthy, however, is the numerical – and hence political – importance of the older sections of the population and their new-found general affluence. Taxpayer and voter attitudes on decisions relating to school investments are likely to be increasingly shaped by an older constituency who may question the case, to greatest effect in systems which allow the most room for voter/taxpayer influence on educational decisions. It suggests for Söderberg the "need in ageing populations for stress to be placed on intergenerational solidarity and support for investments in services essential for children". He does not maintain that ageing necessarily brings a decline in intergenerational solidarity, but that this becomes a new issue in the light of the changing numerical strength of the different generations and the political clout now exercised by older citizens.

Gender and family

Radical changes in the position of women in society

Major transformation in the position of women

Of all the manifest changes to have occurred over the past century, one of the greatest has been the transformation in the position of women in many OECD societies. Some of the most substantial aspects of this have taken place in education itself; others include the public "visibility" of women and their importance, for instance, as consumers in today's affluent societies. Of particular note are two fundamental trends relating to women's lives that serve to define the wider environment for schools and the lives of their students.

Plummeting fertility rates

The first is the major shifts in fertility and birth rates. The facts themselves are dramatic across the OECD. Of the

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Table 1.1. **Total fertility rate[1] in OECD countries, 1998**

Australia	1.8[2]
Austria	1.3
Belgium	1.5
Canada	1.6[3]
Czech Republic	1.2
Denmark	1.7
Finland	1.7
France	1.8
Germany	1.3
Greece	1.3
Hungary	1.3
Iceland	2.1
Ireland	1.9
Italy	1.2
Japan	1.4[3]
Korea	1.6[2]
Luxembourg	1.7
Mexico	2.7[2]
Netherlands	1.6
New Zealand	2.0[2]
Norway	1.8
Poland	1.4
Portugal	1.5
Spain	1.2
Sweden	1.5
Switzerland	1.4
Turkey	2.7[4]
United Kingdom	1.7
United States	2.1[4]

1. Average number of children per woman aged 15-49.
2. 1996.
3. 1997.
4. 1994.

Source: OECD (2001*b*).

29 Member countries for which there were data, fertility rates[4] had fallen by 1998 to below 2.0 in 24 of them, and of these to 1.5 or less in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland (Table 1.1). The age at the birth of the first child has risen steadily, associated closely with the increased employment trends discussed shortly. Between 1970 and 1995, the average across the OECD had risen from 24.2 to 26.6. It stood at over 28 years of age in Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Switzerland (OECD, 2001*a*). (There has also been a sharp increase in single parenthood, discussed further below.)

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The implications of such substantial changes in fertility are far-reaching. They impact on women in ways affecting schools and raise questions such how many women are now having children at all? What are childcare needs? In what period of their adult lives are women having young (pre-primary and primary age) children and how is this affecting their experience of work, education and family? Fertility trends impact on the numbers coming into employment and the future labour supply in OECD countries, and in turn on the issues of dependency and "who pays?", as well as on international population movements and the ethnic diversity of societies. All these are key matters for schools. Fertility rates impact very directly, of course, on the numbers of children and young people coming through school doors each year. It cannot now be assumed that, after dramatic change, fertility rates will remain fixed into the future at the levels of the late 1990s. It is expected that numbers of 5-14 year-olds will drop by 9% of 2000 levels by the end of the decade across OECD as a whole. These numbers are foreseen to fall by the very large measures of 15 to 25% of 2000 numbers in the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic, and Sweden (OECD, 2001*c*, p. 36).

Rising female employment

The very marked shifts in women's employment are the second major set of changes to be highlighted. Across the OECD as a whole, the labour market participation rate of women aged 15-64 stood at over 6 in 10 (61.3) in 2000, still well below the same figure for men (81.1) but nevertheless a very clear majority of working age women (Figure 1.2. Taking the prime age group 25-54 years, these labour market figures are higher still: over two-thirds for women (68.2%) albeit compared with over 9 in 10 for men. In the Nordic countries and the Czech and the Slovak Republics, they stand at over 80% and largely approaching those of men, and at three-quarters or more in another nine countries (Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States) (OECD, 2001*e*, Table C).

Again, such trends are linked to a range of on-going developments of significance both for students still in school and for the future world that today's girls and boys will live in

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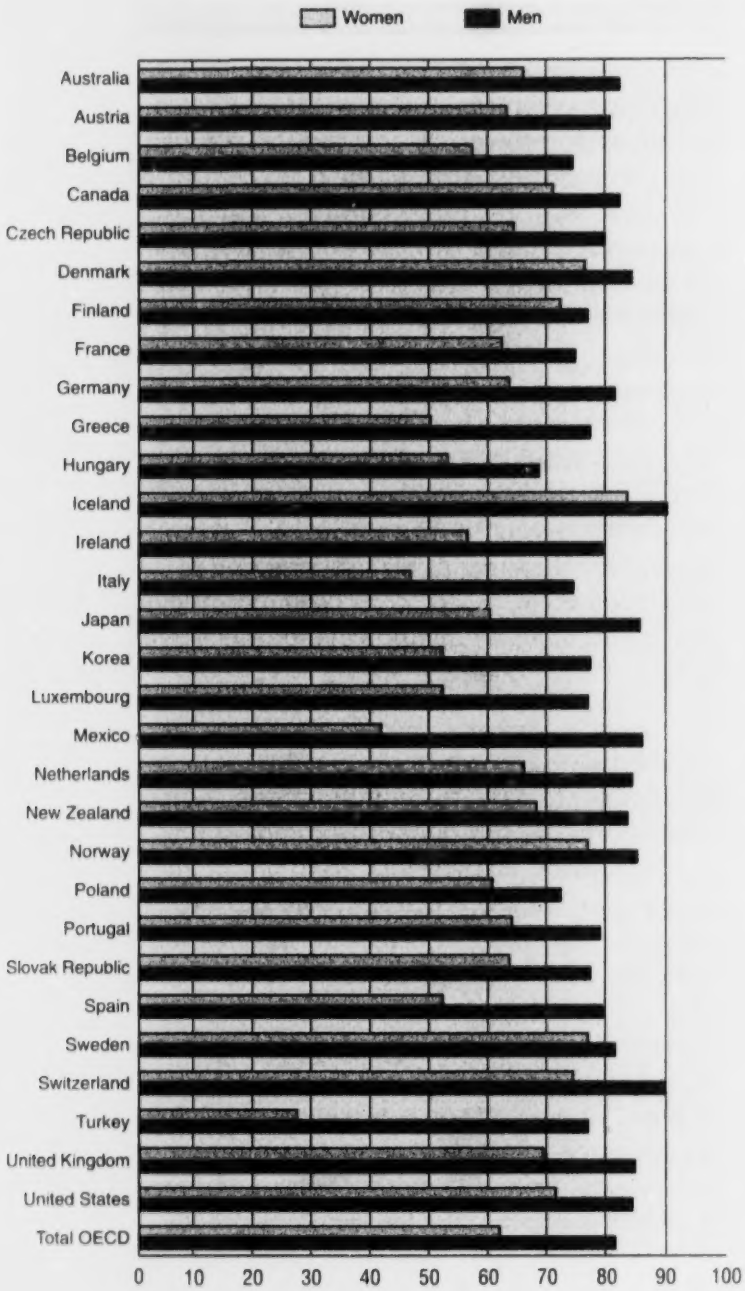
Figure 1.2. **Labour force activity rates for persons aged 15-64 by gender, 2000**



Note: The figure refers to persons aged 15-64 in the labour force divided by the working age population.
Source: OECD (2001*e*), Table B.

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as adults. In addition to the fertility and child-rearing impacts of working life changes already been referred to, further important aspects include the numbers combining work and family responsibilities, the rise of dual-earning families, and the growing gulfs between "work-rich" and "work-poor" households. Much job growth over the past couple of decades has typically been in fields of high female employment, while the areas suffering most dramatic decline have tended to be in the "heavy" male-dominated primary[5] and manufacturing sectors. Some of the most important impacts of women's working lives have been on female educational ambitions and attainments. These have risen dramatically over the past 20-30 years, and are described in the next chapter as representing perhaps the "most remarkable educational trend of the recent period".

Stubborn inequalities alongside positive change

Focusing on the extent of change should not be to ignore continuing problems and stubborn inequalities. Women's earnings on average remain consistently well below those of men,[6] employment discrimination is still rife, as is the male domination of the higher reaches of management, the professions, and decision-making in most countries. While female employment has been more buoyant than men's, many of the jobs are in low-pay jobs and sectors, with limited rewards and prospects for further learning. Women who are combining paid work and family responsibilities find themselves under the intense time and energy pressures of "dual careers" at work and at home, as the patterns of household duties change much more slowly than do patterns of employment. Issues of childcare continue to be major preoccupations, despite the long time period during which working mothers with young children have become the norm in OECD countries, with continuing lack of coherence between many enterprise and school practices, on one side, and the demands of working parents, on the other (OECD, 2001*h*). And, the growing precariousness of marriage and rise of single parenthood bring risks of exclusion that are felt most acutely by women.

Yet, whether the focus is on the problems or on the positive transformations of women's life-styles, these changes have been fundamental and are likely to continue.

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Carnoy, in his contribution to this report (Chapter 5), is clear as to their profundity. Alongside globalisation, he describes the "second major force behind world-wide social change" as the "rapid transformation of family life, driven in turn by a profound revolution in the social role of women".

Changing family lives and structures

Many affluent families in OECD countries

Changes in family structures – the immediate environments in which young people are raised – have been dramatic in their scale and swiftness, closely linked to the rapid developments in fertility and female employment discussed above. Some are generally positive. Falling numbers of children, combined with continuing growth in overall standards of living and consumption, mean that many young people have access to goods and services as a norm that would have been unimaginable even 2-3 decades ago. As with other trends reviewed in this section, however, the changes are complex and characterised by tensions.

But also "time-poor" and more family breakdowns

Improved material lifestyles often depend on double incomes, leading to the phenomenon of families being "work-rich" but "time-poor". Even such a basic family experience as the shared meal is being eroded for many – with longer adult working hours and the preferences of the young to "graze" – raising new questions about the nature of socialisation.[7] More obvious tensions still are raised by marital dissolution and fragmentation. The culture of modern family life, of providing an environment of affection and self-expression for children, stands in marked contrast with the conflicts of marital disintegration. Very large numbers of the marriages now being entered into will end in divorce. By the mid-1990s, the overall OECD divorce figure stood at 4 out of every 10 marriages. In Belgium, Sweden, Finland, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom and the United States, the rates were significantly higher at between half and 70% (OECD, 2001*o*). More in schools are growing up as single children, or with the different types of sibling relationships formed through delayed family completion, re-marriages, or new partnerships.

More single-parent households

Whether because of marital dissolution or through rising numbers of children born outside marriage, the numbers of

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single-parent families are growing – another key trend in schools' wider environment. Even by the early 1990s, single-parent families were around a fifth in many OECD countries, and well over a quarter in the US (OECD, 1999*a*, Table 1.3). While not everyone will experience marital breakdown as a disaster, it leaves few unscathed and the risks of social exclusion can be acute among single-parent families, particularly those of vulnerable labour market status. Even when entrapment in poverty is avoided, the subjective impact on the young through a heightened sense of insecurity and risk may be no less real.

Strengthened family/school partnerships

It is a truism in education that supportive family environments are critical for students, learning, and schools. Yet, it is also clear that such beneficial conditions cannot just be assumed. Van Aalst's review in this volume (Chapter 8) of studies and enquiries into the future world for schooling in a number of countries shows that there is a widespread perception of the weakening role for the home and family. The partnerships offered by schools to families in socialisation and investment through learning thus take on heightened importance. For such partnerships to be really effective to provide a balance to the individualism and fragmentation of contemporary societies, they will need to be accorded a high priority among the aims of schools rather than be regarded as incidental spin-offs. This issue helps to define the "reschooling" scenarios outlined in Chapter 3.

Knowledge, technology and work

The knowledge and learning economy

Knowledge-based economies, learning societies

OECD economies can now accurately be described as "knowledge-based", a matter of obvious importance to schools, given their unique set of educational responsibilities. The implications of these changes for education, and the extent to which schools are characterised by the organisational features typically found in knowledge-intensive sectors (these aspects are discussed in Chapter 2), have recently been addressed in a major OECD/CERI report (OECD, 2000*a*).

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This report summarised some of the key indicators of the developing "knowledge-based economy":

> "Many indicators show that there has been a shift in economic development in the direction of a more important role for knowledge production and learning (...). Moses Abramowitz and Paul David (1996) have demonstrated that this century has been characterised by increasing knowledge intensity in the production system. The OECD's structural analysis of industrial development supports their conclusion. It has been shown that the sectors that use knowledge inputs such as R&D and skilled labour most intensively grew most rapidly. At the same time, the skill profile is on an upward trend in almost all sectors. In most OECD countries, in terms of employment and value added, the most rapidly growing sector is knowledge-intensive business services (OECD, 1998*a*, pp. 48-55).

Coping with rapid change

These observations have led more and more analysts to characterise the new economy as "knowledge-based", and there is little doubt about relative shift in the demand for labour towards more skilled workers (OECD, 1994). However if the knowledge intensity of the economy were to increase permanently, the destructive aspects of innovation and change might take on greater importance. In an alternative interpretation of the change in the composition of the labour force, Carter (1994) pointed out that the main function of most non-production workers is to introduce or cope with change. The rising proportion of non-production workers may thus be taken as the expression both of the growing cost of change and of an acceleration in the rate of change.

An acceleration in the rate of change implies that knowledge and skills are exposed more rapidly to depreciation. Therefore the increase in the stock of knowledge may be less dramatic than it appears. An alternative hypothesis is that we are moving into a 'learning economy', where the success of individuals, firms, regions and countries will reflect, more than anything else, their ability to learn. The speeding up of change reflects the rapid diffusion of information tech-

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nology, the widening of the global marketplace, with the inclusion of new strong competitors, and deregulation of and less stability in markets (Drucker, 1993; Lundvall and Johnson, 1994; Lundvall, 2000)." (*op. cit.*, pp. 28-29)

Implications of rapid change for school knowledge?

This analysis identifies the importance of speed of change, which brings costs as well as benefits, and the premium this places on abilities to learn. It also raises profound questions for the kinds of knowledge students are being equipped with, and ought to be equipped with, by schools. This is especially because the actual deployment of knowledge by professionals, workers, scientists and so forth takes place well after they have left school, perhaps many years later, by which time most of what they were taught within the school curriculum is forgotten. This is the case for the highly skilled and still more for those in low-skill work environments who are up against the "use it or lose it" principle (OECD, 1997*b*, Chapter 3). The questions of the knowledge and skills that schools should focus on in preparing students for future lives within tomorrow's learning society are rendered still more complex as the pathways and destinations that students will later follow are far from identical. Not all will pursue professional careers in the dynamic sectors of the "new economy" – indeed most will not – so that curriculum cannot be designed as if all are on an identical high-flying track. The knowledge that many will use in work, society or leisure may be far from advanced.[8]

"Know-what", "know-why", "know-how", and "know-who"

Despite – or because of – very diverse needs, attention comes to focus on generic skills and competences in addressing these questions. The four-way typology of knowledge presented in the knowledge management analysis is useful in distinguishing between "know-what", "know-why", "know-how", and "know-who" (Lundvall and Johnson, 1994; OECD, 2000*a*, p. 14). While "know what" is important, in its own right and to anchor concretely the latter three, the implication of rapid change and "knowledge decay" is that schools must lay a very sound foundation on which the other three forms of knowledge can be developed and maintained. How well they succeed in this in all countries is still an open question, especially where the traditions of factual knowledge transmission and recall remain dominant.

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The "technological paradigm"

"A common feature of new general-purpose technologies is that it takes a long time before they are implemented and use to their full potential across economies (...). It took several decades before manufacturing enterprises, having already invested in steam engines, introduced electricity. Thereafter, it took a long while before they implemented the organisational changes, in particular the assembly line, and developed the skills required to use the electro-motor to its full potential (...).

ICT is an example of a general-purpose technology that has pervasive effects on practically all sectors of economic activity. In line with other general-purpose technologies, reaping its full benefits calls for comprehensive structural and organisational change. However, the importance and all-purpose characteristics of ICT should not lead to lose sight of the more general dynamics of innovation in OECD economies. These are driven, *inter alia*, by the evolving relationships between science and industry and the impetus for better exploitation of knowledge."

Extracts from OECD (2000*e*)

Technological change as a driving force – opportunities and risks

The message from this analysis [and the recent final report from the OECD Growth Project (OECD, 2001*k*)] is thus both that technological change is a pervasive driving force in OECD countries and that its impact depends critically on its general context, including the opportunities for innovation and for the production, mediation and use of knowledge. Technology does not deterministically drive wider change, a point reinforced by Miller in his contribution to this report (Chapter 7). The high-level OECD forums on 21st century transitions analysed this inherent openness by distinguishing between opportunities and risks. There is agreement that technological advances in train now could be as significant as the earlier radical shifts associated with the steam engine, electricity, and the car, whether referring to ICT, bio-technology, or new materials technologies. But, there are also risks, including that possible schisms and divides will grow – between haves and have-nots, risk-takers and risk-avoiders. Addressing such divides defines important challenges for education, including schools.

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The "New Economy"?

So marked have been the shifts towards the integration of ICT into work, and the key economic role of knowledge and learning, that the term "new economy" has entered the policy and media lexicon. It is a term given to loose and exaggerated application, as implied by the title of the recent report from the OECD Growth Project *The New Economy: Beyond the Hype* but it points to possible new forces and relationships. For instance, productivity growth through technology might continue apace without running up against standard "old economy" constraints like rising inflation, facilitated by widespread organisational changes, the decline of hierarchical structures, and the powerful use of the networking possibilities of ICT. An important feature as identified by Miller is the blurring of the supply and demand sides of the economy, so that consumers enter more directly into the production process before output is actually created. How far such "new economy" characteristics are typical of the OECD as a whole is still debatable, especially in the light of recent economic downturns and the loss of confidence in the technology sector in particular. By the time current school students are active in the job market, however, such cautions and caveats may well be long forgotten.

Changing nature of work and careers

The shift to service sector employment

There have been massive changes taking place in the structure of work and the economy over the long term. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the countryside has been transformed in many countries, with urbanisation and the widespread exit from agriculture. Even the factories that lay at the heart of jobs and economic strength within living memories are now declining as the place of employment. There has been a massive shift to services – the "tertiarisation" of work. With the possible dawning of the "new" economic age, these major movements are far from over.

Service employment has continued to grow in OECD countries, and now accounts for three-quarters of employment in several countries. The overall OECD average stood at 65% in 1999 (OECD, 2000*b* and 2001*e*). As recently as the mid-1980s, there were marked national divergences in the

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service share across countries but by now patterns have converged. Services are associated with a different profile of jobs from manufacturing. Of people working in the goods-producing sector, 65% occupy blue-collar jobs; this stands at less than 13% in services. While the ratio of women to men is only a third in the "goods-producing" sector, they are a slight majority (ratio of 1.04 OECD-wide) in the "service sector". In the latter, employment growth has been most rapid in producer and social services.[9] More generally, there has been a process of "up-skilling", revealed most convincingly in "within-industry" and "within-occupational" shifts, rather than the larger sectoral movements referred to above (OECD, 2001*a*, Chapter 4).

Up-skilling but many jobs not highly skilled

While it might be tempting to interpret these figures as sign that all now participate in the "new economy", they should be put in perspective. While among services, distributive jobs have grown least they still account for very large numbers, and typically double those in business services. Many work in the personal sector of hotel, catering, entertainment, domestic service and the like, very often in low-skill jobs. The social services sector is more dynamic with clear divergences across countries but even here, the ratio of unskilled to skilled jobs could well increase as social service jobs expand (Esping-Andersen, in Chapter 6 of this volume). At the same time, part-time working has increased in most OECD countries, sometimes very rapidly, associated on average with lower hourly earnings and less training (though such generalisation admits many exceptions) (OECD, 1999*b*, Chapter 1; approximately a quarter of female employment is part-time and 1 in 13 male jobs across OECD as a whole). And, while unemployment levels have been falling in recent years, it still represents a critical problem. Across the OECD as a whole, unemployment as a proportion of the labour force (men and women) stood at 6.4% in 2000, rising to nearly 9% (8.8) for the OECD European area.[10] The overall picture is therefore complex, with many problematic, as well as positive, developments.

Recognition of the importance of the knowledge economy should therefore be tempered by acknowledgement

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that a great many jobs remain outside very high-skill, dynamic sectors of the job market, and many people are outside the job market altogether. There is a general trend towards "up-skilling" but only as a central tendency. Demand for the most unskilled jobs has fallen – and hit hard the prospects facing the unqualified – but large numbers still occupy them. It is most plausible to assume that very wide differences in skill demands will remain a feature of tomorrow's employment world.

Insecurity

Consideration of skills trends can usefully be complemented by those relating to insecurity. The main trend is towards greater insecurity at all levels, but especially among blue-collar workers and the unqualified for whom job stability has clearly dropped. In part, security is a subjective matter: "a widespread and, in some countries, very sharp increase in numbers perceiving employment insecurity took place between the 1980s and 90s" (OECD, 1997*a*, Chapter 5). Even where job instability does not appear to have increased, the expected loss from job separation has as it becomes more difficult to find a satisfactory new income or security match in the event of job loss. This ties in with the "consumer society" trends discussed later in this chapter, bringing greater pressures to maintain income and lifestyles for individuals and families.

Changing concepts of skill and career

The more general conclusion to draw from these manifold changes is that linear hierarchical concepts of "skill", closely correlated with qualification levels, do not well apply to the jobs of today and tomorrow. More dynamic relationships are in play, with possibly far-reaching implications for how educational credentials will function in the labour markets of the future. This theme is developed in the scenarios presented in Chapter 3, where the consequences are discussed of futures in which schools are "liberated" from the very powerful grip they exercise over the credentialing and certification process. Already, the degree of change and flux has undermined the model of the lifetime career engaged in until retirement after an initial training period, which is one powerful argument in favour of universalising lifelong learning. It is difficult to be precise on how many major job shifts

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people already in employment will make throughout their working lives; still more is precision impossible about futures for students still in school. The safest assumption is that all can expect unpredictable and changeable careers. This alone presents considerable challenges to schools, especially those which hold on to traditional assumptions about educational and work careers.

Rising adult educational attainments – towards the "expert society"?

Adults becoming better qualified

With the major post-World War II expansion of educational provision, attainments of adult populations have naturally risen, too. These trends are set to continue into the foreseeable future. For the whole 25 to 64 year-old age group – which includes those in their fifties and sixties who were in school too soon to profit from the more recent periods of educational expansion – as many as 62% have attained at least upper secondary education across the OECD as a whole rising to 8 in 10 or more in a number of countries[11] (Figure 1.3). Even for tertiary education attainment, many adults now have reached this level. Just over a fifth (22%) of all aged 25-64 across the OECD as a whole have attained tertiary level education, which is hardly a small elite group as in earlier times, and in many the figure stands at around a quarter of working-age adults. In Canada (39%), Finland (31%), Japan (31%) and the United States (35%), it is around a third or more.

Especially younger adults, today's parents

For younger adults who have not long left initial education the figures are naturally higher again and the overall OECD average now approaches the three-quarters mark (72%) of 25-34 year-olds who have attained at least the upper secondary level of education. In 13 countries, this figure is 80% or more, and even over 90% in the Czech Republic, Japan, Korea, and Norway. Among the next youngest 35-44 age group, as many as two-thirds across the OECD have attained this level of education, and is much higher than this in a number of countries. At the same time, around a quarter of younger adults have had a tertiary education – 25% in the 25-34 age group and 35-44 (23%) age groups. A third or more of the

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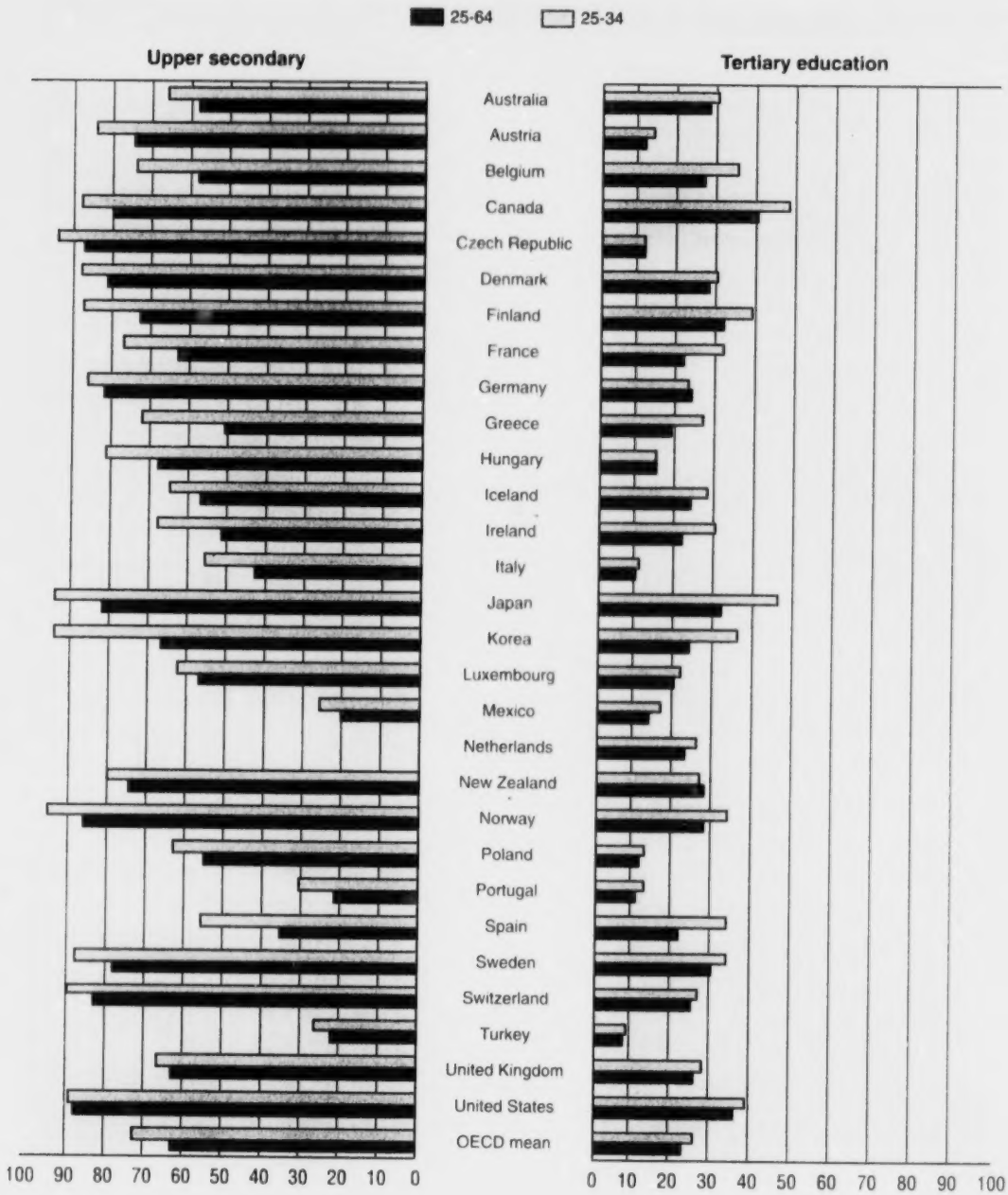
Figure 1.3. **Population having attained at least upper secondary and tertiary education, 1999**

25-64 and 25-34 age groups



Source: OECD (2001*c*), Tables A2.2*a* and *b*.

35

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youngest adults up to their mid-thirties have had a tertiary-level education in a number of countries, and in some cases it is approaching one half (Canada and Japan). These higher attainments of younger adults up to their mid-forties, together with those of students now coming through the system, will mean that attainments will continue to rise at least over the medium term. These younger adults in the 25-44 age groups also correspond broadly to the cohort of parents of school students in school; their rising "expertise" could well be exerting a diffuse but significant impact on schools, as discussed below. On the strength of this form of evidence, then, OECD countries seem well embarked to become "expert societies".

Problems and paradoxes: adult literacy

But still poor adult literacy levels

Such a conclusion might, however, be premature. The aggregate attainment figures are not very revealing about the spread of lifelong patterns of learning as they largely reflect the expansion of "front-end" provision in schools and colleges for the young. Hence, they tell us little by themselves about continued learning thereafter. More specifically, OECD analyses carried out with Statistics Canada have exposed an apparent paradox to qualify images of the "expert, high-skill society". Despite the rapidly increasing levels of educational attainment, there are serious literacy problems among the adult population of many countries. Indeed, certain of the countries enjoying among the highest levels of measured educational attainment are also those having outstanding adult literacy problems.

> "In 14 out of 20 countries, at least 15% of all adults have literacy skills at only the most rudimentary level, making it difficult for them to cope with the rising demands of the information age (...) low skills are found not just among marginalised groups but among significant proportions of the adult populations in all countries surveyed. Hence even the most economically advanced societies have a literacy skills deficit. Between one-quarter and three-quarters of adults fail to attain literacy Level 3, considered by experts as a suitable minimum skill level for coping with the demands of modern life and work." (OECD and Statistics Canada, 2000, p. xiii)

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Some with poor literacy are the unqualified – but by no means all

In part, of course, the "paradox" is explained because the high educational attainment and low literacy data refer to different populations. The analysis does indeed show that educational attainment is the strongest single predictor of literacy: an extra year of education is associated, on average, with an extra ten points on the IALS literacy test. Yet, the "fit" between the two is far from tight and many other factors are involved. In some countries, significant proportions of those who had apparently attained well in the education system got only the low literacy scores. There are very large differences between countries in the measured literacy scores of those who had less than upper secondary education.[12] In some, there is a clear gap between the literacy scores of those with upper secondary and tertiary level attainment, in others little discernible difference.[13] These variations warn that substantial skills problems in many societies have not been resolved with rising educational attainment levels.

The world of the school

Declining school "mystique"

The rising general attainments of the population have other more diffuse impacts on the world of the school, particularly of reducing the distance between schools and teachers, on the one hand, and the general public, on the other. Many are now very familiar with the world of education, and are themselves qualified to levels at or greater than teachers. In the process, schools inevitably lose some of the "mystique" they enjoyed in earlier times. Parents and others are articulate and demanding. Pressures for greater accountability to render schooling more transparent can be linked *inter alia* to this factor, as can the problematic standing of teachers as a professional group, discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

Educated parents mean more critical attitudes

Söderberg in this volume (Chapter 9) suggests on the basis of Swedish data that higher levels of parental education foster critical attitudes that might actually weaken the standing of schools: "The general conclusion might thus be that a rise in educational level leads to more critical thinking about, and higher demands on, the educational system. It is possible that a well-functioning school system in a paradoxical sense contributes to weakening its own position." Much depends on what "weakening" and

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lower measured satisfaction levels mean. On the one hand, critical attitudes could be a sign of robustness as rising expectations and a desire for improvement find expression in educational action and investment.[14] On the other, they might express genuine dissatisfaction leading increasing numbers to retreat towards alternatives such as home or specialist schooling (as outlined by Hargreaves, 1999). More in-depth international evidence could usefully illuminate the issue of public attitudes and expectations. It is an important area and defines one dimension of the scenarios presented in Chapter 3.

Declining authority of expertise and ethical signposts?

An element of the declining "mystique" and distance between schools and societies also stems from the more diversified sources of knowledge in today's society. As populations become more highly educated and as the means of accessing knowledge become more diversified, the standing of school knowledge and the curriculum is increasingly problematic. Some refer to a general "decline in the authority of expert knowledge" (Prout, 2000), accompanying the erosion of cultural absolutes. Michel, in Chapter 11, also describes the problems, as well as the appeal, of the new "managerial paradigm" characterised by flexibility rather than more clear-cut cultural and ethical signposts. Schools can respond in different ways. They might try to "keep up" by seeking to reflect all the rapidly changing sources of knowledge in their curriculum. Alternatively, greater flux and diversity of knowledge, far from confusing their mission, may force greater clarification of what it is that schools are best placed to focus upon.

Lifestyles, consumption and inequality

The consumer society and sustainability

Massive rise in consumption in OECD countries

Consumption levels define a major aspect of life in OECD countries, in particular the trends and scale to which they have grown. To anyone arriving from a century ago, they would be a source of incredulity. There have been enormous changes experienced in average lifestyles and what many children today expect to be their standard of living in the future. The sheer scale of the change was one of

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the basic facts that introduced a joint Environment/CERI Workshop on education, learning and sustainable consumption held in OECD in 1998:

> "The scale of human consumption has risen dramatically and unequally over this century. The 1998 *Human Development Report* documents this: from $1.5 trillion in 1900 to $4 trillion in 1950, and then a trebling to $12 trillion in the 25 years to 1975, followed by another doubling to $24 trillion in 1998." (OECD, 1999*d* and UNDP, 1998)

There are undoubtedly massive benefits lying behind these stark figures, representing liberation from privation and drudgery. Unless there is a cataclysmic change brought on by, say, global conflict, it is perhaps safest to assume that the world of tomorrow for most OECD school students today will continue to have very high levels of consumption.

But *problems too*

Yet, contained in these high and growing consumption levels are challenging aspects of the school's environment. A growing concern is that such high consumption has strengthened materialism as a defining value in itself, to the detriment of a range of other civic and cultural values that are needed for the future health of societies. This, and individualism more generally, may be eroding the "social glue" that is essential not only for individual and social development but even for economic development. (The relationships between social capital, human capital and sustainability are explored in a recent OECD analysis, see OECD, 2001*d*.) Nor, contrary to what might be expected, have individuals' subjective feelings of well-being kept pace with growing personal resources and their ability to consume (Inglehart, 1997). The opposite may even be the case: "(...) the proportion of people in the US describing themselves as 'happy' peaked in 1957 even though consumption rates have increased considerably since then. The US Index of Social Health has decreased by 52% in the last two decades despite a rise in consumption of nearly 50%." (OECD, 1999*d*, p. 12)

Given the role of schools in socialisation, it is not surprising that their potential for educating for a more complete range of human endeavours and outcomes should be

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appearing increasingly on educational agendas. An ambitious approach has been developed as part of a Pacific region project on "multi-dimensional" citizenship, which suggests the need for all to be sensitive to a variety of dimensions – the personal, social, spatial, and temporal – that defines their lives (Cogan, 1997). Such agendas are inherently controversial, whether through fear that devoting greater attention to values and civic attitudes risks indoctrination or that further extensions of schools' tasks, particularly beyond cognitive learning, will only exacerbate existing school overload. There are powerful economic and political interests with a stake in high consumption so that schools confront an ambivalence in the societal messages they receive in relation to consumption.

Not all share affluent lifestyles...

Concerns relating to the "consumer society" derive also from the disadvantage then suffered by those who do not enjoy access to high levels of consumption and material well-being. The more affluent become larger sections of OECD societies, the more sharply is the disadvantage experienced by those who still miss out. Still more glaring than these within-country inequalities, are the divides between the rich countries and the poor. The 2000 *World Development Report* shows that, despite major indications of progress over the past half century: "Of the world's 6 billion people, 2.8 billion live on less than $2 a day, and 1.2 billion on less than $1 a day" (World Bank, 2000). For these enormous numbers, the notion of a "consumer society" is largely meaningless.

... especially in the developing world

Such stark differences between the rich and poor in the world become a growing part of society's consciousness, particularly through the immediacy of media attention. Many of the young are acutely aware of such glaring inequalities and the environmental issues with which they are intertwined. In his contribution to this report (Chapter 8), van Aalst describes how the importance of these issues to young people is perceived as a driving force in schooling in the 21st century in a number of countries. It is less clear how consistent are these environmental concerns with the consumption habits of many in society, including young people who are among those with the highest material expectations.

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Slow progress towards sustainable consumption

Sustainability lies at the heart of these questions. At least since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, there has been recognition of just how unsustainable many contemporary production and consumption practices are. Though ambitious objectives for change are in place, actual progress is still painfully slow. While the issues of sustainable production and consumption are intertwined, those relating to consumption are much nearer to the lives of school students and provided the focus of the 1998 Environment/CERI Workshop. (For a recent summary of the environmental situation in OECD countries see OECD, 2001*i*.)

It is natural to suggest that sustainability concerns should be reflected in new programmes that "teach" children about the environment. Yet, new programmes jostling for room into already-crowded school curricula are unlikely to make a significant impact, and moreover environmental information campaigns have been shown to be singularly ineffective in changing consumption habits or deeper-held values. Instead:

> "Among the most important learning that schooling provides of relevance to sustainability are the attributes of critical thinking, self-reflection, media analysis, personal and group decision-making and problem-solving. These capacities and skills abound in countries' official definitions of educational aims, but are often far less in evidence in the actual teaching and learning that take place. The successful acquisition of precisely these capacities, however, might represent a much more significant step towards an education for sustainability than relatively small-scale examples of curriculum innovation, no matter how valuable these are." (OECD, 1999*d*, p. 20)

Calling for critical, informed, responsible young people

A key question then is how well school systems in OECD countries really do develop the more general, critical higher-order competences that are horizontal across subjects and disciplines, building capacity in the young to become informed and responsible in the world of the 21st century. How well they do provides a valuable yardstick of the quality of education provided by schools, but as yet firm evidence is elusive. Such competences closely match those required in the labour market and organisations, including the capacity of each person to design their

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own lifelong learning agendas and negotiate their way through complex, individualised pathways of professional development. They are less matters to be taught as part of the manifest curriculum, more embedded in the culture and everyday practice of working schools. They are inimical to the most traditional approaches and ethos of schooling, already out-moded by the second half of the 20th century.

Incomes, poverty and life-chances

Earlier long-term trends towards narrowing gaps...

In OECD countries, the long-term trend had been for income inequalities to diminish, even while the disparities between the top and bottom remain large, this alongside the massive rises in consumption already described (*e.g.* OECD, 1993, Chapter 5). More recently, however, changes have been occurring. On wealth, Wolff (1987, p. 1), taking a very long-term view, observed: "Perhaps the most important finding is the gradual but persistent decline in the degree of wealth inequality among households during the 20th century". The World Development Report (World Bank, 2000, p. v) also observed positive changes over the past century: "The 20th century saw great progress in reducing poverty and improving well-being. In the past four decades life expectancy in the developing world increased 20 years on average". At the same time, the inequality between the rich and poor countries of the world has been widening at an alarming rate as summarised by Jolly (2000). He refers to modestly growing inequalities over the first half of the 20th century, that quickened and then soared after 1960: "from 30 to 1 in 1960 to 60 to 1 in 1990 and 74 to 1 at present".

... but not between rich and poor countries

More recent signs of growing inequalities

Within the OECD countries since the 1970s inequality trends have been disturbed. They have widened in some countries in the 1980s, continuing into the 1990s. The more recent trends on incomes and poverty are presented in the box below in the form of "stylised facts" (OECD, 1999*e*). Such trends help to define the broader environment in which students live and, more specifically, highlight that schools are particularly affected in terms of groups hardest hit.

Widening gaps in some countries

Important messages for schooling emerge from these "stylised facts". The first is that the very long-term trends

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towards a narrowing of resource differentials among individuals and households have not continued as before. In many countries, the gaps are now widening, though this should be understood in the context of the overall rise in affluence, health and consumption levels. When all the caveats have been entered, however, and in the light of the well-established links between home background factors and educational attainment, schooling is confronting the situation where critical social inequalities remain. Enthusiasm for the "new economy", "knowledge society", etc., should not disguise this. Indeed, such developments may well be exacerbating the problems of those who are unable to participate fully in them.

Extracts from the "stylised facts" on income inequality and poverty in OECD countries

There was no generalised long-term trend in the distribution of disposable household incomes since the mid-1970s. However, during the more recent period (mid-1980s to mid-1990s), income inequality has increased in a greater number of OECD countries, *i.e.* in over half of the observed countries.

In those countries where inequalities increased, this happened mostly among the working-age population, whilst there were less changes among the retirement-age population. However, average incomes of the elderly increased towards the average of the population in most countries.

Changes in income distribution in the past ten years generally favoured the prime-age and elderly age groups, in particular those around retirement age. Persons living in multi-adult households have seen their income shares rise somewhat, especially in households without children, or when there are two or more earners present. On the other hand, young age groups lost ground, in particular those aged 18-25. Relative income levels of single parents and persons in workless households tended to weaken further.

The increased dispersion from gross earnings and other market income was the main contributor to widening inequality at the household level: increased inequality in earnings themselves; increased income differentials between households with different degrees of employment attachment; and a trend towards "employment polarisation" in many countries, leading to a simultaneous increase in "work-rich" and "work-poor" shares of households.

This increase in market income inequality was not, or not entirely, translated into higher inequality of disposable incomes for the working age population, as both transfers and taxes off-set the effects of earnings and capital/self-employment income on the distribution. In most countries, this effectiveness increased.

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Extracts from the "stylised facts" on income inequality and poverty in OECD countries (*cont.*)

Apart from income taxes, public transfers also played an important role in the redistribution of incomes to lower-income segments, in particular among the working-age population (...). Moreover, public transfers are a more important source of income for lower income groups. The part of non-pension transfers in the incomes of poorer working-age adults increased in a majority of countries.

Relative poverty rates remained broadly stable over the last ten years, with some countries experiencing declines (in particular Belgium and Denmark) and some others increases (in particular Italy and the United Kingdom) (...). The share of both elderly and children in the poor population decreased over the last ten years in most countries. However, poverty rates of children increased somewhat in a number of countries, while poverty rates of the elderly decreased.

Joblessness is a key factor in explaining why poverty often increased for those aged 18-25 and single parent families (...). For the working age population, poverty rates on a pre-tax and transfer basis rose in all countries, on average by 4 percentage points. Post-tax and transfer poverty rates fell or increased by less in all but two countries. This indicates an increased effectiveness of tax/transfer systems in alleviating poverty in a majority of Member countries.

The young and single-parent households slipping back

A second main message is that different population groups and countries have fared differently. Lack of a universal trend is nevertheless consistent with growing inequalities in some countries, and, for market incomes, in the majority of countries. Some trends are even more clear-cut, especially concerning the socio-demographic groups whose fortunes have improved and others whose fortunes have slipped. Of particular relevance for schools is that the most gains have been experienced by older members of populations, and those well-established in employment while younger people (including children) and those with precarious labour market positions have done relatively badly. Households with children headed by young parents have lost out. Especially vulnerable are single-parent households, which have grown throughout the OECD, and those described as "work-poor". In short,

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problems have been aggravated precisely among those for whom schools are most responsible and have diminished among those furthest from the school gates.

Child poverty very marked in some countries

There are wide variations between countries regarding the concentration of exclusion and poverty among children (UNICEF, 2000). In some countries, these rates are very low at only 5% or even less (Nordic countries, Belgium and Luxembourg). In others, as many as a fifth to a quarter of children live in poverty (Turkey, the United Kingdom, Italy, the United States, Mexico).[15] Compound disadvantages set up compound barriers as described by Esping-Andersen in Chapter 6 when he refers to the "bundling" of low pay or unemployment in couples, families or communities, causing people to become stuck in these situations, nurturing concentrated deprivation, and hardening the sense of social failure. He also draws attention to marked variations in the prevalence of terms such as "underclass", "social exclusion", "two-speed"/"two-thirds" society, etc., in everyday debate and discourse. Such terms, he suggests, are found rarely in Mediterranean Europe, where family institutions and protection remain strong, or in the Nordic countries with highly developed equity attitudes and anti-poverty policies.

Growing youth suicide, especially among young men

An extreme result of exclusion and insecurity is suicide. Kennedy in Chapter 10 compiles youth suicide figures to show that several countries have recently recorded steep rises. He links this to a broad range of factors, including the lack of inclusion, opportunity and social capital, and the experience of hardship. Many more young males commit suicide than young females – by a factor of 3, 4 or 5. However these gender differences should be accounted for – whether linked forward to the employment insecurities brought by the disintegration of staple male manual job opportunities, or connected back to the consistently higher numbers of boys than girls in special education, or to some other cause – these represent a stark indicator of contemporary malaise.

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Key role of the state

A third main message from the "stylised facts" is also relevant to the world of education. The role of the state through taxation and social transfers has been a critical one in modifying the inequalities that exist from the operation of the market in the absence of government action. This impact has, if anything, become greater and more effective in latter years. Thus, while it is commonly observed that "welfare state" structures and assumptions have been eroded since their immediate post-World War II heyday, there remains a critical state role in redistributing access to resources. The school is often an active partner in public policies to combat exclusion (the issue of co-ordination of services has been extensively studied by OECD/CERI; see OECD, 1998*e*).

The geo-political dimension – International, national, local

Globalisation

Polarised views on globalisation

Globalisation refers to a diverse set of important changes, often highly controversial. Viewpoints differ sharply on whether they are positive and to be encouraged, or grudgingly accepted, or else to be fiercely resisted. For some, globalisation represents the opening of national barriers, allowing the passage of knowledge, trade and culture for prosperity to flourish for the benefit of humankind. It embraces the Internet, travel, exchange and similar cross-border developments. For others, it encompasses a raft of mainly reprehensible developments – from international corporate power to growing international inequalities between rich and poor, to cultural and political hegemony. Viewpoints tend thus to be polarised between extremes, divided less over the facts of globalisation than over its benefits and costs.

The economic dimensions...

Globalisation has a strong economic base in growing interdependency across countries and between enterprises, involving increased and more liberalised trade, flows of finance, persons and services, the "borderless world" of rapid electronic communication and exchange, and a range of other

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... *the political...*

on-going developments. It refers politically to the internationalising changes introduced by governments and NGOs as well as the prominence of international bodies/associations of varying statuses, powers, and memberships. In the world of today and tomorrow, such international bodies are inevitable in some form – even curbing the "excesses" of globalisation would ultimately depend on co-ordinated international action – but they attract growing controversy and are criticised variously for the approaches/philosophies they espouse, the volume of resources they control, or their apparent distance from the democratic process.

... *and the cultural ones*

The cultural dimension is equally controversial. There are very positive developments that have quickened over the past half-century: the major growth in travel and awareness of other cultures, the explicit pursuit of multiculturalism in education and societies, including awareness of the critical role of languages. Again, however, there are countervailing trends. Many worry about the impact of globalisation on language and cultural diversity. There has been a very clear shift towards English as the international lingua franca, as well as the questionable benefits from ubiquitous anglophone TV series. Even the apparently benign expansion of travel, broadening minds and economic development, is not without cost – analysed with prescience by Hirsch (1977) a quarter of a century ago – as high-volume tourism eventually threatens the very magnet sites that so attract. More problematic still are the effects described by Michel in Chapter 11 in Part II:

> "Globalisation, because of the risk it brings of soulless standardisation, can lead to fragmentation and a reduced sense of belonging to a wider community. The excesses of unbridled markets, in which prices and the market are more important than social and cultural relationships, are being met with an excess of nationalism, regionalism and parochialism. These threaten peace and raise the spectre of resurgent racism and intolerance."

In all, therefore, the globalisation issues are far-reaching indeed.

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Knowledge, learning and education are intertwined through all these dimensions. As expressed by Carnoy:

> "Even our cultures are globalising. One effect is that activities, including how we relate to our family and friends, are rapidly becoming organised around a much more compressed view of space and time. This extends to children in school or watching television who are re-conceptualising their 'world', in terms of the meanings that they attach to music, the environment, sports, or race and ethnicity."

Learning to deal with "hyper-complexity"

Education bears a heavy responsibility in equipping young people with the means to deal with the complexity – the "hyper-complexity" – these trends represent. The profound ethical and values questions call for discerning competences and a broad understanding of contemporary culture and life. These are formed through education in all its settings, formal and informal, but schools clearly have a potentially key role. In some specific instances, such as second- and third-language teaching, schools have the lead responsibility.

Opening educational boundaries, for good or ill...

There are charged decision-making and knowledge issues that also increasingly arise for education through the impact of globalisation. A world in which schools very actively use ICT and the Internet is a very different one from the situation at the other end of the spectrum where school knowledge is very tightly controlled through nationally- or locally-agreed syllabuses, textbooks, and materials. While at present schools mostly operate somewhere in the spectrum between the extremes, the trend is clearly moving towards the ICT scenario. This is on-going, not just about possible futures. In tertiary education in particular, there are already many examples of cross-frontier distance education programmes and diplomas, some public, some private. Increasing school use of Internet and educational software raises questions about who produces materials and where, in the process recasting traditional relationships and notions of sovereignty (see OECD, 2001*j*).

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... and creating challenges for national decision-making

Forms of educational globalisation impact on schooling in other ways. National political debates are increasingly shaped by international comparisons, particularly of matters such as class sizes or student scores. Some systems have already been shaken by the so-called "TIMSS effect" after publication of comparative scores (and there may soon be similar "PISA effects" when the first results of the OECD/PISA surveys are published).[16] Certain countries have had to dip well into the international teacher labour market in the face of shortages, as such advanced-skill markets are becoming increasingly global. In short, education is an integral element of globalisation, as well as being profoundly affected by it. It features prominently as one dimension of the scenarios presented in Chapter 3.

The international movements of populations

Sharpening diversity and equity issues

An important aspect of globalisation is the greater movement of populations from one country to another. It is plausible that these flows will increase substantially in the years ahead though current trends are mixed. If increases materialise, they would enhance still further ethnic and cultural diversity and, in some cases, the socio-economic and educational problems experienced by minority populations. These present major challenges to the place called school. They sharpen issues concerning how well schools are able to deal with, even promote, diversity. They increase the range of family expectations and aspirations regarding what schools should achieve. They raise acute equity questions – when are educational differences the laudable expression of cultural diversity or instead the unacceptable face of social inequality?

Net immigration into the OECD countries

OECD countries had already become places of net immigration by the beginning of the 1990s, including in the Southern European area that before had been an important sending region (OECD, 1991). Regarding the scale of population movements, migration flows have tended to increase since then but it is difficult to generalise, particularly on the basis of relatively short-term trends. Even over the course of 1990s, there were up- and down-turns in numbers, significant differences across

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countries, while the nature and source of migration vary substantially. The phenomenon of illegal and irregular migration, by its nature, is impossible to chart with any precision but it is clear that it continues in large numbers. Those concerned are among the most excluded in OECD countries, lying outside even the most basis welfare provisions open to others.

Illegal migration

Much within*-OECD *movement

Very different patterns of population flows emerge depending on whether they are expressed in absolute or relative terms: the former indicate the scale of world-wide movements whereas the size of flows relative to national population is what matters particularly to each country, including their schools. In absolute terms, by far the largest inflows of foreigners are recorded in the United States and Germany, followed by Japan, Canada and the United Kingdom. A striking feature of inflows for each country is that they tend to be dominated by a very small number of sending countries. These reflect a pattern of "regionalisation" and sometimes continuing ex-colonial links. They belie the notion that population flows are predominantly from poor to rich countries for a very large amount of the movement goes on between the OECD countries themselves. Some of this takes the form of the highly-skilled personnel who now participate in international labour markets.

Population growth outside the* OECD *area leading to intense worldwide pressures

Demographic projections suggest that pressures are set to intensify. Of the expected population increase of 2 billion over the first quarter century, only 145 million are foreseen for the OECD area, and much of this dominated by a small number of countries (Mexico, Turkey, Canada, the United States and Australia). The relative share of the OECD countries among the world population is expected to decline by 2025 to around 16% from current levels just under 20%. With 93% of the additional 2 billion humankind to be born outside the OECD area, the pressures "pushing" people to the richer countries could well intensify. At the same time, the very low birth rates in the OECD area might themselves be "pulling" in inflows, especially in the context of continuing labour shortages. These could be

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especially marked in Europe and Japan where the impact of ageing will be greater (OECD, 1999*c*). Whatever their source, an important trend already visible is for the numbers of foreign and foreign-born members of OECD societies to rise.

The "push" and "pull" factors will likely involve different profiles of foreign populations – those looking to escape poverty by moving to one of the world's rich nations contrast with the highly-skilled being targeted by OECD enterprises seeking workers internationally. Such differences and the demographic pressures combined, in the context of the markedly growing inequalities between the affluent and poor countries of the world, create conditions that may turn out to be far from stable.

Communities and regions

The importance of the community – but what are communities today?

If the importance of a supportive family and home background to attainment is an educational truism, the role of close links between schools and their communities can be counted as another. Increasingly, however, questions arise about what those "communities" are. The extent of geographical mobility reduces lifelong connections to particular neighbourhoods and the density of social interactions that this brings. The radical decline of industries such as agriculture, mining, fishing, and steel production brought devastating decline to the residential communities that depended on them. There are other equally problematic development challenging established notions of "community": new patterns of urbanisation and sub-urbanisation; the individualisation of lifestyles (including the central place occupied by TV and other ICT media); the decline of established religions in many societies, as well as of other community-based institutions (local retailers, cafés, etc.).

Mixed evidence on levels of social engagement, with new forms of leisure and informal "connectedness"

Evidence relating to the "social capital" of social and civic engagement (OECD, 2001*d*) suggests complex patterns. In some countries, there are signs of a decline in social engagement, membership of different bodies and other associational activity (Australia, the United States), in others, the picture is less conclusive. There does appear to be a shift towards individualised leisure and community activities, with more informal and transient forms of engagement, as well as a

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growth of single issue politics. Our levels of trust in each other may not have declined significantly, but they have in relation to a range of public institutions. These are complex developments and the temptation should be resisted to romanticise about mythical "golden times" – new forms of communal activity, including virtual communities, develop as others decline. Yet, there do seem to be new trends in train relating to the nature of our connections to society and each other that are fundamental to grasp for schools and the young.

Without romanticising about a lost "golden age" of community, there are problems to be addressed. One affecting children very directly is lack of public spaces devoted to play. Such is the profound sense of unease about the security of young people, itself linked to the loss of the sense of protection offered by stable residential communities, that play space may be under-utilised even when it is available. Less established residential communities can lead to the deterioration of the social capital in the form of norms and values supportive of education, as analysed by Coleman a decade or more ago (Coleman, 1988). Schools can less readily turn to the "community" as an educational partner where it has become elusive, transient or virtual. These problems contrast with a widespread agreement on the need to devote particular attention to the socialisation of the young. In situations of problematic community support and social capital, individual schools, parents, and immediate families are placed under more intense pressures and responsibilities.

Community and socialisation role for schools

One way forward is to reinforce the socialisation functions of schools, and to recognise more explicitly their nature as communities in their own right, where, for instance, contacts, friendships, and play are valued as essential not incidental. Such an emphasis does not necessarily conflict with a strong focus on cognitive development but it suggests acknowledgement of a comprehensive set of educational outcomes going beyond measurable standards. This broader understanding of the school is developed particularly in Scenario 3 of Chapter 3, which itself draws on the arguments developed by Carnoy:

> "The functional separation between residence, work, and urban services, the increasingly lower density of

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> new urban forms, and increased geographic mobility have made it increasingly difficult to build social communities on a neighbourhood basis (...). The central organising point in our society at the neighbourhood level is the school – elementary and secondary, as well as child development centres. Because schools' location patterns are pervasive and residence-based, and because sociability is made easier through children's connections, schools could become the platforms for a variety of neighbourhood issues."

Of particular interest in this analysis is not only the concept of the school "with" or "for" or "instead of" the community but the school as community. In this analysis, the school becomes perhaps the leading community institution.

Learning cities and regions – "geography matters"

There is further reason why the locality and region are important. An over-individualised view of education, aptitude and society can neglect the importance of the geographical configurations in which we live. These configurations help to shape cultures and infrastructures for learning. From this derives the interest in the concept of "learning cities and regions" (OECD, 2001*f*). Building on the critical lesson that "geography does matter", the aim of this family of strategies is to create dynamic synergies and partnerships, to which schools contribute. Conversely, without recognition of the local dimension, opportunities for such synergies and partnerships may not be grasped, to the detriment of school learning.

Learning by interacting

A strong focus on the local level is justified not only by the need to create effective partnerships but from the very nature of knowledge and learning:

> "Most significantly, however, both the production and the dissemination of 'know-how' is facilitated by what has been termed 'learning-by-interaction'. Quite simply, individuals are able to build significantly on what they learn through 'learning-by-doing' by communication and exchange with others – colleagues both in the workplace and outside (for example, Rubenson and Schuetze, 1995). Recent evidence from the UK suggests, moreover, that individual 'learning-by-interacting' is especially important where people perceive them-

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selves to have exhausted the learning potential of 'learning-by-doing' on their own account (Eraut *et al.*, 1998)." (OECD, 2001*f*, pp. 16-17)

Again, there is need for new balances to be struck from an over-individualised view of the nature of education and schooling.

The changing nature of governance

Governance changing...

The environment of schooling embraces the broad nature of governance, which impacts on education either indirectly or directly through different forms of educational decision-making. Common challenges are now confronting governments across the different realms of public policy, as they explore new approaches to decision-making, accountability, social responsiveness, and citizenship. In some, this is taking place against a history of powerful "welfare state" arrangements that have been modified over the recent period into increasingly complex, mixed policy models. Globalisation is one major factor spurring the search for new models.

... but governments not withering away

As a result of these changes, some suggest that governments are in a state of terminal decline, overtaken by new players exercising private corporate, consumer and NGO power, or by configurations of policy-making undermining traditional sources of sovereignty and influence. Challenging questions about government effectiveness are implicit in the analysis of declining of social capital, insofar as it suggests serious public disengagement from political institutions and tears in the social and community fabric. Mulgan's analysis for the OECD's International Futures Programme, while acknowledging the extent of change and the difficulties some governments have found to adapt to greater complexity, networked forms of organisation, and huge increases in information flows, questions the "terminal decline" thesis:

"The share of tax in GDP actually role across the OECD from 34% in 1980 to 38% in 1996. Contrary to many predictions the demand for government and the capacity to supply this demand both remain strong. On the demand side, electorates have signalled clearly that they want public services, the security afforded by

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governments in health care and pensions, as well as common goods like clean air and safe streets. Business too has rediscovered its dependence on government to maintain social order, education and infrastructures." (Mulgan, 2000, p. 146)

Active choices in a complex world

As regards education and schooling, with the enhanced role for the exercise of citizen choice, rather than regulation, a growing premium is placed on the individual's capacity to exercise choice in the face of complexity. This in itself defines a demanding agenda for learning and an important criterion for judging the outcomes of schooling. As with the earlier discussion of sustainability, the conclusion may be less that students need more civics programmes – that might anyway be learned through a variety of channels – but more the critical faculties that will allow them to be active citizens. This is one pillar of preparation for lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning implies complex governance and partnerships

Indeed, the major societal project of "lifelong learning for all" (OECD, 1996*a*), by its sheer ambition and diversity, is characterised by a complexity of forms, stakeholders, partnerships, and funding that epitomises the new context of governance in the 21st century. As an integral element of the overall strategy, schooling is thereby brought into quite new forms of organisation and decision-making.

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Notes

1. For discussion of how some of the most important aspects relating to schooling can remain "invisible" through their very familiarity, see Hutmacher (1999).
2. This understates the extent of "dependency" to the extent that economic activity is being delayed well beyond 15 years of age, which has been a powerful trend. It would also understate it if more are taking early departure from the labour market pre-65 years but on this there has been no clear trend over the 1990s. Partly, growing female participation rates offset falls for older men, but even for the latter there has been no consistent downward trend across countries (OECD, 2001*e*, Table C).
3. A study using the same instruments in Australia confirmed Hahn's results (Mellor, 1998).
4. Average number of children per woman aged 15 to 49 years.
5. Agriculture, mining, fishing, forestry, etc.
6. While the percentage gender gap for full-time earnings has narrowed to 10-15%, as a proportion of men's earnings, in Belgium, Denmark, France and Australia, it remained between 25 and 30% in Austria, Ireland, Canada, Spain and Portugal, and was around 40% in Japan and Korea (OECD, 2001*o*).
7. Not all countries could be so described, and those in the South European area in particular appear to be characterised by strong family institutions. These are singled out by Esping-Andersen in this volume (Chapter 6) as countries that have avoided the extreme marginalisation of social exclusion, as strong families offer protection and inclusion even in the absence of resources, though Carnoy reflects whether even in these cases traditions will be strong enough to resist the pressure leading to fragmentation.
8. This point has also emerged from work in the OECD International Futures Programme: "The key to a thriving learning society is the capacity of most people to produce relatively simple living knowledge, even if such knowledge is not new or a 'first'– either historically or worldwide" (Stevens *et al.*, 2000, p. 14).
9. The "service sector" comprises producer, distributive, personal, and social services.
10. Of these, nearly a third (31.4%) had been jobless for a year or more across OECD, with the corresponding European figure at 43.2%.
11. The Czech Republic (86%), Denmark (80%), Germany (81%), Japan (81%), Norway (85%), Switzerland (82%), the United States (87%).
12. For example, in Sweden and Germany more than half the adults who had not completed upper secondary education scored at 3 or more on the document literacy scale. Less than 20% did so in the United States, Poland, Portugal, Hungary, Slovenia, and Chile.

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13. "(...) the benefit of a completed tertiary education compared with secondary education differs dramatically across countries. In the Netherlands, for example, the difference in scores between those with only secondary education and those with tertiary education is very small, particularly when compared with the difference between these same educational groups in the United States. In Germany, the link between educational attainment and average literacy skills is weak at all levels of education. This contrasts with the pattern observed for a country such as Slovenia." (OECD and Statistics Canada, 2000, p. 24)
14. Söderberg also suggests on the basis of Swedish data that parents may operate as an articulate but in general "conservative" force – wanting results in terms of the tried and tested and avoiding any radical change that might be seen as risky.
15. Children defined as less than 18 years of age, poverty as less than 50% of median disposable household income, and the child poverty rate as the proportion of children living in households with incomes falling below this threshold.
16. TIMSS: Third International Mathematics and Science Study; PISA: Programme for International Student Assessment.

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Chapter 2

Schooling Developments and Issues

Introduction

The broad canvas of Chapter 1 is complemented in this chapter by a closer look at education systems themselves, particularly schools. The chapter aims less to summarise trends and instead to identify some key developments and questions informing the scenarios in the following chapter, though any set of issues will fit differently each country's particular traditions and situation. How different are countries' education systems is now a moot question – will schooling continue to express largely national cultures or is there now a process of convergence in train, reflecting broader globalisation? The answer to this question influences whether the scenarios outlined in this report are alternative futures for countries or instead whether all are being pulled increasingly into the same main broad model.

Robust school systems

The universal schooling model: relatively recent but firmly established

The universality of the "place called school" across OECD countries is a more notable fact than might at first sight appear. Only a century ago, universal secondary education was not established in some places and compulsory elementary attendance still in its infancy. Now, they are among the most established features of our societies. From this observation potentially opposing conclusions can be drawn as regards the future of schools. On the one hand, their historical recency is a reminder that they are less permanent than they seem, and may be subject to further important change in the future. On the other, that so many countries of such diverse cultures have arrived at a generally

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common arrangement for their young indicates the power of the schooling model. It means, following Hutmacher (1999) that: "There are aspects of what schools do that really 'work'. If they were totally dysfunctional, as some critics have supposed, they would not have survived for so long, still less to have expanded markedly over recent decades." (p. 33)

Extended participation, blurring the distinction between compulsory and non-compulsory attendance

Part of schools' universality is that education for the young is everywhere compulsory, with convergence apparent in that countries that had relatively late starting ages are introducing obligatory attendance for younger children, while those marked by early departure have sought to extend it. The obligatory period, that used to define the main boundaries of educational participation for most, is now extended so much in the pre-primary, upper secondary and tertiary phases that the very significance of compulsion has become blurred. In many countries, over 90% of the age group are enrolled in education for 12 or more years, and in some it is higher than this. In Sweden, the figure is 13 (from ages 6 to 18), in Japan and the Netherlands (between ages 4 and 17) it is 14 years, rising to 15 in Belgium and France (between ages 3 and 17) (Table 2.1; see also OECD, 2001*h*). Over three-quarters of the 15-19 population across the OECD (76.9%) are now students (though not all in places called "school"), and in a number of countries more than 85% are enrolled: Belgium/Flanders (90.6%), France (87.2%), Germany (88.3%), Netherlands (87.7%), Norway (86.1%), and Sweden (86.2%). Even the proportion of 20-29 year-olds who are students stands at 1 in 5 for OECD as a whole (20.7), and is a third or more in Finland (36.1%) and Sweden (33.7%) (OECD, 2001*c*, Table C1.2). Despite the intense policy attention being devoted to the lifelong reorganisation of learning, this evidence is strongly indicative of the substantial strengthening of "front-end" initial education.

Stronger "front-end" education

Growth in female attainments – a remarkable educational trend

A major extension in educational participation is accounted for by rapidly rising female attainments, and this from a position of disadvantage within the past 20-30 years (OECD, 1986). Across the OECD as a whole, women can now expect to attend education for nearly an additional half year (0.4) compared with men, and the gap is widest in

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Table 2.1. **Years during which 90% are enrolled and enrolment rates for 15-19 year-olds, 1999**

	No. of years when over 90% of age group enrolled	15-19 year-old enrolment rates
Australia	11	80.3
Austria	12	76.7
Belgium	15	90.6
Canada	12	75.3
Czech Republic	12	74.8
Denmark	13	80.4
Finland	11	84.5
France	15	87.2
Germany	12	88.3
Greece	12	82.0
Hungary	12	78.1
Iceland	12	78.7
Ireland	12	79.8
Italy	12	70.7
Japan	14	*m*
Korea	12	81.2
Luxembourg	12	73.8
Mexico	7	39.3
Netherlands	14	87.7
New Zealand	12	72.5
Norway	12	86.1
Poland	11	83.0
Portugal	10	76.3
Spain	12	76.3
Sweden	13	86.2
Switzerland	11	83.6
Turkey	4	30.5
United Kingdom	12	72.5
United States	10	78.1
Country mean	12	76.9

m = missing data.
Source: OECD (2001*c*), Table C1.2.

those countries where the female strides have been greatest. In 17 out of 21 countries with data, female graduation rates from upper secondary education exceeds that of young men, and by 10 percentage points or more in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Spain (OECD, 2001*c*). With school systems often characterised as painfully slow to change, this is indeed rapid and represents perhaps the most remarkable educational trend

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of the recent period. Certain distinctive gender paths and educational choices do remain and, as discussed in the previous chapter, these female educational gains are far from matched in corresponding earnings (see OECD, 2001*a*, Chapter 3). The extent of female educational progress is indicated by the concern now expressed instead in some countries for male under-achievement, linked in part to the decline in low-skill entry-level jobs that once were the destination for many unqualified young men.

And more "non-traditional" students

A further aspect of the extension of schooling has been the retention of many "non-traditional" students who before would have left, or been left aside by, school. Such a broad range of aptitudes and backgrounds increases the challenges facing schools, teachers and education authorities.

Massive school systems...

From the universality of schooling, and the growing participation in both compulsory and non-compulsory programmes, derives another key fact: OECD countries have massive systems of schooling, with millions of students and teachers in thousands of schools. Many more again are involved in organising education – administrators, decision-makers and inspectors; specialist support, ancillary and training staff; researchers; parents; etc.:

> "The education sector comprises a significant proportion of the labour market in all OECD countries. On average, 5.4% of the total labour force work in education including teachers, teachers' aides and research assistants, professional support personnel, management and administrative personnel, and other personnel who support the maintenance and operation of schools. The vast majority of these educational personnel are teachers [and] account on average for 3.5% of the total labour force. Combined primary and secondary teachers account for 2.6% of the total labour force, while those at the tertiary level account for 0.6%." (OECD, 2001*c*, p. 213)

... with far-reaching implications for reform

The sums of money involved are enormous – around 6% of GDP on education, and some 4% specifically on schools (though these magnitudes vary widely). To this can be added substantial additional outlays of time and money

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made by households and others. There have been very large investments made in school premises, which represent enormous collective monetary value in terms of property, buildings and equipment some of which are very longstanding.

The sheer scale of the school enterprise risks being overlooked when the focus falls, as it often does, on individual schools. It can render change aimed at large sections of the teacher or student body cumbersome and slow. Given the numbers involved, effective education reforms can prove very expensive. Such scale also influences teacher status, given that it is much more difficult for very large numbers to command prestige compared with smaller professional groups. The importance of these considerations is reflected in the next chapter where one of the "status quo" scenarios is described in terms of robust bureaucratic systems.

Despite common features, very wide diversity in structures, traditions, and roles

Having noted common aspects of school systems, there are important differences. Some systems maintain selection whereas many others have adopted comprehensive models. At the same time, simple classifications of models become harder to apply in the face of the specialisation of schools, the role of parental choice, and the contribution of the private sector. These vary widely across countries, as do the relative powers of the state, religious groups, and the community. Some countries maintain strong apprenticeship systems, whereas in others the institutionalised links between education and the labour market are much less well developed.

There are other important variations across countries. While all countries report a minority of "school failure", the relative scale of the phenomenon varies considerably (OECD, 1998*d*). This underlines that "failure" is not a constant impervious to policy action, but a social and educational variable. Large differences also exist between countries in those counted as having special educational needs (OECD, 2000*g*). There are major variations visible in student-to-teacher ratios. In primary education, student/teaching staff ratios, expressed in full-time equivalents, range from a high of 32 students per teacher in Korea to lows of 11 in

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Denmark and Hungary, around an OECD mean of 18. There is also large variation between countries at the secondary level, "ranging from more than 21 students per full-time equivalent teacher in Korea and Mexico to below 11 in Austria, the Flemish Community of Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Italy, and Luxembourg." (OECD, 2001*c*, p. 240) These and other characteristics that vary across countries are certainly consequential for the organisation of teaching and learning. Behind the shared label "school" there exists a wide range of experiences and organisational characteristics.

Towards schools as learning organisations?

Moving away from the "factory model" and towards the "learning organisation"

Despite the many changes that have taken place in schools over recent decades, the concern remains that too little has changed about the place called school in its basic structural, organisational and behavioural characteristics. Many of the buildings are the same as in the first half of the 20th century or before – welcome continuity in some respects but raising the question of how well adapted to the learning needs of the 21st century. Some have referred to the "factory model" of schooling, that grew out of the industrial societies of the late 19th and earlier decades of the 20th century. This is characterised – perhaps caricatured – as a school mirroring the mass production methods of the industrial era that produced it, turning out a future workforce for the most part with basic skills and compliant attitudes.

Schools: vital in making the transformation to the knowledge-based societies of todayand tomorrow, but must be revitalised

The question is then whether this remains the dominant model or whether instead schools have moved on to become the "learning organisations" appropriate for the knowledge-based societies of today and tomorrow. To what extent are schools and school systems willing to break the moulds of traditional classrooms and didactics? How far have they moved to become "learning organisations", concerned with knowledge-creation as well as knowledge-transmission (see OECD, 2000*a*, and Hargreaves, 1999). The importance of making these changes was underlined by former Swedish Education Minister Ylva Johansson, the Chair of the Netherlands/OECD "Schooling for Tomorrow" Rotterdam conference, in her conclusions:

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"In sum, schools have been very important and, in many respects, successful institutions. They were integral to the transformation from agrarian to industrial societies. They represent a very important investment for our countries in making the further transformation from industrial to the knowledge-based societies of today and tomorrow, but for this they must be revitalised and dynamic."

In moving beyond the long-established models, the prevalence of the single-teacher classroom unit is in some cases being modified through the adoption of more complex, collaborative teams of teachers, though it is still hard to gauge how widespread this is. Such models of teaching and the organisation of learning are in general more demanding professionally and call on a wider range of skills and competences. In-service and initial training should play a major part in preparing for, and realising, these approaches. The creation and application of professional knowledge on the scale and in the time-frame demanded by "schooling for tomorrow" make demands at the individual and system levels:

From individuals to networks, from knowledge transmission to knowledge creation

"At the level of the individual teacher, there needs to be a psychological transition from working and learning alone, with a belief that knowledge production belongs to others, to a radically different self-conception which (...) sees the co-production of knowledge with colleagues as a natural part of a teacher's professional work. At the system level, ways have to be found to bring teachers together in such activity". (OECD, 2000*a*, p. 74)

New roles in school for other adults and experts?

Further modification to single-teacher classroom models comes with the introduction of parents and others into school teaching and learning. While an OECD/CERI study conducted several years ago found numerous positive examples relating to consultative governance and active parental involvement in homework schemes, there is far less evidence of such involvement in school-based teaching and learning (OECD, 1997*c*). At the same time, many countries are working with different forms of work experience programmes, integrating elements of non-school learning with their conventional coursework, which means that school students come to learn with a range of adult professionals. How

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to open professional school roles for adults with different forms of expertise, while at the same time avoiding the assumption that teaching requires no specialised knowledge and training – the "bright person myth" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 309) – defines a challenging agenda.

Flexible use of facilities and buildings

Considerable attention has also been given across OECD countries to ways of using existing educational facilities more flexibly (OECD, 2001*m*; OECD, 1996*b*). Greater flexibility involves addressing established educational aims more effectively through imaginative uses of educational facilities and creative design; in part, it is about opening schools to new uses, learners and schedules; in part, it is about creating alternative forms of schooling beyond conventional locations.

Overhauling educational R&D

The educational R&D system, as in other sectors, ought to be a major source of new insights, innovation, and improvement. But, it struggles to fulfil this role and its potential remained largely under-developed. The level of such investment is far lower than any other sector of comparable size, with an average of less than 0.3% of total education expenditure allocated to research so that the educational knowledge base tends to be seriously underfunded. It is unlikely, however, that just more funding of traditional research is sufficient, given the fragmentation of much educational R&D, and the difficulty of ensuring that it informs and is informed by practice. It suggests the need to address more profound questions relating to the nature, organisation and outcomes of R&D, focusing on development – "D" – just as much as research – "R" (OECD, 2000*a*).

ICT *in schools**

Major educational ICT investments, especially in hardware and connectivity...

Perhaps the factor most identified as heralding fundamental change in the structure and organisation of schooling is the spreading impact of ICT on learning. There has been major growth in the use of computers and in access to the Internet, which opens up burgeoning opportunities for

* This section draws substantially on the report prepared for the ICT Forum held in Paris on the occasion of the meeting of the OECD Ministers of Education, April 2001 (OECD, 2001*l*).

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research, sharing materials and networking among teachers and learners. Governments, the private sector, families and individuals are making very large investments in ICT for education. In the 1999 *Education Policy Analysis* (OECD, 1999*f*, Chapter 3), this was estimated at an annual figure of US$16 billion for OECD countries across primary, secondary and tertiary education, which could well have grown significantly since. The bulk of this to date has been spent on hardware and connectivity, far less on software, and relatively little on teacher training, though the balance has begun to shift recently in recognition of unmet needs. But despite high expectations and growing use, the evidence is not yet compelling that much impact has been made on the teaching and learning taking place in schools or that a significant learning return can be seen for the major investments undertaken.

Teachers and learners are the core elements in the education process and they need to embrace the potential of ICT for these benefits to be realised. In general, this is still not the case, however, even though many schools are well equipped with computers and access to the Internet, albeit not necessarily in every classroom. Mostly the technology use reflects traditional classroom methodology, though affording some increased attention to the individual learner. It still depends too much on highly motivated, pioneering principals and teachers (see OECD, 2001*c*, pp. 254-264; and Pelgrum and Anderson, 1999).

... but insufficient investments in skills, organisations, and people

Hence, more important even than the investments in equipment, connectivity and materials are the human and educational aspects – training, professional development, and the reorganisation of education, schools and classrooms on a sufficient scale to realise the potential of ICT to make a real difference to learning. This means to focus on the skills possessed by individuals and teams of teachers, on the attitudes and learning environments so that the imaginative and discerning use of ICT is possible, and on the incentives for teachers to develop new approaches and competence in their day-to-day teaching. Far from ICT's active use diminishing the role of the teacher, as some have expected, it calls for a more diverse curriculum and a demanding repertoire of teaching and organisational skills.

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Mismatches between conventional organisation of education and effective use of* ICT *for learning

ICT offers manifold opportunities to develop the skills of communication, analysis, problem-solving, information management and retrieval – in short, the lifelong-learning skills which are increasingly valued in contemporary society. The Internet opens up access to public information and opportunities for dialogue in unparalleled ways. Yet these skills and ways of working sit uneasily with the existing school curriculum, and are not reflected in the leaving examinations used for certification purposes. The educational potential of ICT cannot be fully realised whilst these imbalances remain.

The "learning digital divide"

Attention has also come to be sharply focused on the "digital divide". In national debates and international initiatives, much of the attention has been on access to technology, especially in less-developed countries. But the telling divides concern education and competence with ICT as much as the technology itself (see OECD, 2000*c*). The term learning digital divide signals these problems, which form in fact a complex of divides. Given that within OECD countries the gaps in home ICT access and use are much wider than exist in education, there are important equity responsibilities to be discharged by schools in tackling this form of learning divide.

Enormous potential alongside profound questions

The scale of the educational investment in ICT has provided a powerful influence for innovation and reform. It implies a changed relationship between learners and teachers, and for both it opens up opportunities for a more collegial approach. But it also raises profound questions: for the nature of schools as learning organisations and for the routines of educational systems, for teachers and their professional roles, for schools as cultural and socialising institutions, for languages and cultures, and for relations between the generations.

Evaluation, assessment and certification

The influential role of evaluation and assessment – matching it to 21st century needs

What is assessed in education, especially quantitatively, powerfully shapes policy debate and practice. Hence, it is important that assessments are appropriate for the 21st century, reflecting demanding, dynamic concepts of educational quality. What once were considered highly advanced cognitive and attitudinal competences, beyond

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the reach of most, are increasingly expected as the norm. Similarly with what is expected of schools and teachers: the criteria by which they are judged need to reflect increasingly demanding definitions of education and professionalism. Evaluations and assessments are key elements in the decision-making process. They provide the information on which many accountability judgements are made and the means for steering in systems that are increasingly decentralised. How adequate this information is depends largely on how comprehensively it covers the key dimensions of system and institutional performance rather than just a selection of the most readily measurable.

"Summative" assessment

One major purpose for assessment and evaluation is to take stock of what has been attained, whether in absolute terms or through comparisons – "summative" assessment. New surveys and indicators have made a major contribution to this but in most countries, examinations and certification represent its most influential form. The question arises of whether the traditional examination system that still dominates in many countries exercises an altogether excessive influence, diverting massive volumes of energy into the credentialling rather than learning process. Yet, even if most can agree that examinations dominate excessively, they do perform a critical sorting and selection function. This is expected and readily understood by students, teachers, parents and the wider public. If schools do not do this, other ways will need to be found to meet this function.

Competence recognition and certification – a declining educational monopoly?

Significant change will call for new departures in methods and systems for competence recognition. It is scarcely imaginable that significant progress can continue towards the knowledge-based, lifelong learning society without major changes in the systems for recognising and accrediting competence. This in turn will inevitably have an important impact on the formal education system, especially schools. As monopolies over certification are broken and recurrent opportunities for competence recognition change perceptions about different educational pathways, it can be expected that education systems will put up fierce resistance to the perceived loss of power. Declining monopoly

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may in the end turn out to be a source of liberation, however, permitting them to focus much more on learning and less on sorting and credentialling. These possibilities and options enter into the delineation of the scenarios below – futures where schools continue to be dominated by the requirements of standardised examinations and tests are clearly different from those driven by individual learning and development.

"Formative" evaluation at the heart of educational progress and individualised learning

The other major purpose of evaluation and assessment – the formative – is to provide frequent feedback as the means of building further learning progress. Schools, teachers, and students alike require such information to identify attainments made and to expose needs. Often, the assessments involved are informal. They do not offer the newsworthy judgements of summative assessments, but these forms of evaluation lie at the heart of educational progress and are integral to concepts of learning organisations. In general, it remains a badly neglected field. Supportive policies could be taken further in many countries, for instance, through the development of teacher skills in incorporating formative evaluation into day-to-day teaching. The thorough-going individualisation of learning depends on such strategies.

Teachers and teacher policies

Teacher quality to the fore, as a result of rising expectations...

The quality of learning and the success of reform and innovation depend crucially on teachers. Teacher quality, of individual professionals and of the force as a whole, has risen in profile and priority as a result of a number of diverse factors. Partly it is a reflection of the rising expectations towards education in general which perforce finds expression in what is expected of teachers. Ambitions for what education can achieve have grown sharply over recent decades in many countries, and the stakes involved have correspondingly risen. This might well be preferable to indifference but it brings its own tensions, and as demands grow so do criticisms. These may unduly fall on schools when the relevant learning settings are often elsewhere, whether other forms of post-school education or homes,

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communities, workplaces or the media. Justified or not, searching questions come to be asked about teachers' professional activity, their organisation and abilities, and their quality in general.

... of recognition of teachers as the linchpin of schooling success...

A second reason for increasingly intense focus on teacher quality is readier acknowledgement in many quarters of how teachers are the linchpin of schooling success. To plan for educational change in the absence of a close focus on what teachers do, how well they are prepared, and how they are organised, is to miss a – many would say the – crucial factor. The effectiveness of curriculum or evaluation policies, for example, or new drives to raise standards or to meet the needs of particular groups of students, will only produce significant change if they are well understood and energetically applied by teachers. They are in the vanguard of innovative approaches to teaching and learning. This has always been true but political consensus seems to be shifting towards a better understanding that they are an integral part of the "solution" rather than of the "problem".

This is well illustrated in relation to the integration of information and communication technologies into school and classroom life discussed earlier. At one time, technological applications and computer-assisted instruction were even promoted as a misguided means for making education "teacher-proof". But, without the skilled and imaginative use of ICT by teachers, its potential as a powerful vehicle for learning will remain unrealised. Indeed, in the wake of the major educational investments in ICT, many countries have turned to teacher professional development strategies as essential if such significant expenditures are to yield returns.

... and of greater professional demands

Teacher quality is a high priority today not only because teachers are central to the success of education – which has always been true – but because the demands on them are also rising. The more complex and uncertain the world in which we live, the more that alternative sources of knowledge and influence are available to students, the more open schools become to diverse clienteles, and the more varied

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the organisational and pedagogical strategies that teachers should deploy, the greater become the levels of professional skill needed to meet them. There are growing expectations that they can operate in new organisational structures, in collaboration with colleagues and through networks, and be able to foster individual student learning. These call for demanding concepts of professionalism: the teacher as facilitator and knowledgeable, expert individual and networked team participant, oriented to individual needs and to the broader environment, engaged in teaching and in R&D. Not least, teachers are in the spotlight with the expectation that schools are expected to develop the competences and motivation that will serve students on a lifetime basis, a significant change from the view of school education as a self-contained process.

Diverse national conditions and variables affecting the attractiveness of teaching

The importance of teachers to the future of schooling finds them as one of the defining dimensions of the scenarios presented in the next chapter. This relates to their professionalism and organisation, and to their conditions and the overall attractiveness of teaching. These factors are closely inter-related – the nature of professionalism shapes, and is shaped by, attractiveness of the work and teacher motivation. Were teacher shortages to emerge on a large scale it might well threaten the demanding notions of quality outlined above. One of the six scenarios in the next chapter imagines a "worst case" where shortages reach crisis proportions leading to system "meltdown". In avoiding such a future, salary levels are certainly relevant but by no means determinant:

> "Whilst improved salaries, better physical facilities and lower class ratios have important impacts, the critical features required to raise the image and self-esteem of teachers in the immediate future include more relevant professional training for individual teachers and improved working conditions and work organisation in schools." (ILO/UNESCO, 1997, p. 10)

Salaries vary widely for novice and experienced teachers

Recent OECD analysis in fact shows how varied across countries are the different variables relating to teachers and their conditions. Starting salaries, and those reached well into the career after 15 years' experience, are both relevant to

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the standing of teaching, including the ratios of teacher salaries to country GDP per capita, which take account of varying national wealth. On this latter indicator, the starting salary of primary teachers is highest in Greece (1.3), Korea (1.5), and Spain (1.3), and after 15 years' service, in Greece, Portugal, and Switzerland at around 1.6, New Zealand (1.8), and Korea (2.5). In contrast, even after 15 years, the ratios are still clearly less than 1.0 in a few cases (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, and Norway). Comparable figures for lower secondary teachers are, for starting salaries, highest at around 1.4-1.5 in Germany, Korea, Mexico, Spain, and Switzerland. After 15 years, the highest are in Korea (2.5), Mexico (1.8), New Zealand (1.8), Spain (1.7), and Switzerland (1.9). The same countries have the lowest relative salaries as for primary teachers (OECD, 2001*c*, pp. 203-204). Some regional patterns can be discerned as they tend to be relatively high in the Pacific area, Southern Europe and the German-speaking systems, and low in Scandinavia and Central Europe.

Ageing in some countries and levels and not others

Teacher ageing, often mentioned as a critical problem confronting OECD countries, actually varies widely as well as shown in Table 2.2. Four in ten teachers are aged 50 years or more in Germany (at primary and lower secondary levels), Italy (lower secondary), and Sweden (at all levels, and nearly half are this old in upper secondary schools). In contrast, figures under 20% for the over-50s are found in Austria and Korea, and, among primary teachers, less than a quarter are in this age bracket in Belgium, France, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, and the UK. Hence, the ageing problem is one affecting particular countries and types of education far more than others.

Women in teaching...

Teaching is often labelled a "feminised" profession, though this also varies considerably both by country and by level of education. Women dominate the teaching service in pre-primary and primary schools in most countries, but at secondary level the sexes are in fairly even balance or are even in the minority in some countries (see OECD, 2001*c*). Poor relative pay and status may be associated with

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Table 2.2. **Age distribution of teachers by level of schooling, 1999**

	Primary			Lower secondary			Upper secondary		
	Under 40	40-49	50+	Under 40	40-49	50+	Under 40	40-49	50+
Austria	46.7	38.0	15.3	40.1	43.2	16.8	34.9	40.5	24.6
Belgium (Fl.)	51.4	27.9	20.7	x	x	x	36.4	35.9	27.7
Canada	36.2	38.7	25.1	36.2	38.7	25.1	36.2	38.7	25.1
Czech Republic	42.1	24.6	33.3	42.0	25.4	32.6	35.7	30.6	33.8
Finland	46.3	28.4	25.2	36.1	31.4	32.6	31.1	34.4	34.5
France	41.3	37.6	21.1	36.5	30.8	32.6	37.3	31.5	31.2
Germany	21.5	38.1	40.4	13.7	40.7	45.7	25.2	39.9	34.9
Iceland	45.9	31.8	22.3	x	x	x	30.8	34.4	34.8
Ireland	41.8	33.6	24.7	36.5	34.9	28.7	x	x	x
Italy	31.7	39.7	28.6	9.0	46.4	44.6	17.9	45.0	37.1
Korea	53.2	29.8	17.1	63.4	23.1	13.5	54.3	30.9	14.9
Luxembourg[1]	47.8	29.4	22.9	34.9	32.3	32.8	x	x	x
Netherlands	35.2	40.1	24.6	x	x	x	25.8	39.7	34.5
New Zealand	40.6	36.0	23.5	38.3	36.4	25.2	34.7	37.8	27.5
Norway	x	x	x	37.8	30.3	31.8	26.1	34.1	39.8
Slovak Republic	47.1	27.5	25.6	33.8	37.1	29.1	44.2	33.0	22.8
Sweden	26.1	32.9	41.0	33.2	25.1	41.6	23.4	28.0	48.7
Switzerland[1]	46.3	33.6	20.1	37.9	34.9	27.3	31.9	35.1	33.9
United Kingdom[2]	40.5	36.9	22.5	39.5	38.6	21.9	39.6	38.5	21.8
Country mean	41.2	33.6	25.2	35.5	34.3	30.2	33.2	35.8	31.0

x = data included under other columns in the table.
1. Public institutions only.
2. Only general programmes at the upper secondary level.
Source: OECD (2001c), Table D2.1.

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a high degree of feminisation, but as women's employment expands throughout many professional fields such associations will tend to break down, bringing perhaps still more serious consequences for the future supply of teachers. Concerns of a quite different kind arise from the absence of men teachers. This has become an issue of growing concern in relationship to the socialisation of the young, and especially in situations of children growing up in single-mother families and/or where there is manifest educational under-achievement by boys.

... and men

The importance of continuing professional development is just as critical for teachers as for any other professional sector subject to rapid change. It is equally important for young teachers as for ageing staff. It is at the core of school innovation and dynamism. Networking can be understood both as a means of reorganising teacher work away from individual isolation and as a form of professional development. Opportunities for professional development are an important aspect of attractiveness and conditions in their own right. Despite its importance, the 1998 OECD review was critical of the overall state of teacher professional development, many exemplary cases notwithstanding:

Professional development for all teachers, young and old, but not yet systematic

> "There is, of course, no shortage of in-service training in many of the member countries of the OECD. There is also some evidence of an emerging paradigm shift from individual to whole school development, driven partly by decentralisation and by increased responsibility on schools to decide their own needs. However, much of what passes for professional development is fragmented and fleeting. All too often it is not focused sufficiently and is too 'top-down' to give teachers any real sense of ownership. It is rarely seen as a continuing enterprise for teachers and it is only occasionally truly *developmental* (OECD, 1998*c*, p. 17)."

This is not only about classroom teaching. As responsibility devolves increasingly to those at the local level to make decisions and manage resources, so do the needs multiply for training to discharge these new management tasks. This applies to a wide range of professionals within

Training for school management: a high priority with decentralisation

75

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school organisations and in the wider coalition of stakeholders which makes up the school decision-making environment. There is now a major challenge to organise preparation for management at all levels, and especially for school leaders and other educational professionals when responsibilities are being extended into new and unfamiliar territories (see OECD, 2001*n*).

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Chapter 3

Scenarios for the Future of Schooling

Introduction

Need for policy reflection on long-term future of schooling...

The chapter presents six scenarios constructed through the OECD/CERI programme on "Schooling for Tomorrow". Their purpose is to sharpen understanding of how schooling might develop in the years to come and the potential role of policy to help shape these futures. While this does not exhaust approaches to forward-looking policy thinking, scenario development is a particularly effective way of bringing together the "big picture" of strategic aims, the long-term processes of change, and multiple sets of variables. Perhaps surprisingly, forward thinking of this kind has been relatively little developed in education compared with other policy sectors, despite education's fundamental characteristic of yielding benefits over very long time spans. Former Swedish Education Minister Ylva Johansson, in her conclusions as Chair of the Rotterdam conference described forward-thinking approaches in education as "woefully under-developed". A major challenge for policy-making in this field is both to make it more genuinely long-term in vision and to integrate more effectively knowledge about education and its wider environment into the process of reflection and governance.

... and for clarifying the desirable and the possible

Proposing several scenarios underlines that there is not one pathway into the future but many, and they should not be expected to emerge in a "pure" form. Distilling the infinite range of possible futures into a limited number of polar "types", however, stimulates consideration of the strategic choices to be confronted and the principal dimensions of change. The scenarios invite the questions: *a*) how probable, and *b*) how desirable, each is. These questions have been analysed by Hutmacher in this volume (Chapter 12) using

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earlier versions of these scenarios. The task for policy thinking is to consider what might be done to bring the probable and desirable as closely as possible into alignment, making the more desirable futures more likely, and *vice versa*.

The OECD schooling scenarios

The OECD "Schooling for Tomorrow" scenarios combine different elements – trends, plausible inter-relationships between clusters of variables, and guiding policy ideas. They are thus neither purely empirical (predictions) nor purely normative (visions). They have been constructed as alternatives for schooling per se rather than as educational extrapolations based on scenarios developed for other fields – the social, economic, technological, environmental, cultural, etc. – though, of course, education is strongly influenced by such factors.

These schooling scenarios have been constructed in a time frame of approximately 15 to 20 years – long enough for significant change to occur beyond immediate political cycles, but not so far off as to be remote to any but futurists and visionaries. The interest is as much in the intervening processes of change as in the fully-fledged scenarios themselves. They may be considered either as stable "steady-states" or as more volatile, and hence likely to set further cycles of change in train. The scenarios are bounded in age terms, covering organised learning from birth up to around completion of secondary education. It is for children and young people of this age range that public responsibility for education is most highly developed in OECD countries, raising a distinct set of policy issues compared with later learning for adults organised through highly diverse arrangements. The six scenarios are not specific to the primary or secondary phases, though it can be expected that certain aspects would apply more directly to one or other of these cycles.

Two OECD scenarios extrapolating the status quo, two describing "re-schooling" futures, two "de-schooling"

Two of the scenarios are posited on the continued unfolding of existing models (The "status quo extrapolated"), two describe the substantial strengthening of schools with new dynamism, recognition and purpose (described as "Re-schooling"), while the two final scenarios portray future worlds that witness a significant decline in the position of schools ("De-schooling").

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The "status quo extrapolated"	*The "re-schooling" scenarios*	*The "de-schooling" scenarios*
Scenario 1: "*Robust bureaucratic school systems*"	Scenario 3: "*Schools as core social centres*"	Scenario 5: "*Learner networks and the network society*"
Scenario 2: "*Extending the market model*"	Scenario 4: "*Schools as focused learning organisations*"	Scenario 6: "*Teacher exodus – the 'meltdown' scenario*"

Scenarios referring to whole systems, not individual cases

To facilitate comparison, the scenarios have been constructed within a common framework of clusters of variables that were identified as critical dimensions in determining the shape of school systems: *a*) *Attitudes, expectations, political support*; *b*) *Goals and functions for schooling*; *c*) *Organisation and structures*; *d*) *The geo-political dimension*; *e*) *The teaching force*. Each scenario refers to the systemic "centres of gravity" of schooling arrangements rather than descriptions of particular schools or local cases. While, for instance, there will already be some examples of schools in OECD countries that fit the "re-schooling" features of Scenarios 3 and 4, these would only come about when the large majority of schools can be described as "key social centres" or as "focused learning organisations".

The "status quo extrapolated"

Scenario 1: "Robust bureaucratic school systems"

- ***Strong bureaucracies and robust institutions***
- ***Vested interests resist fundamental change***
- ***Continuing problems of school image and resourcing***

Scenario 1: strong bureaucratic systems resisting radical change...

This scenario is built on the continuation of dominant school systems, characterised by strong bureaucratic elements and pressures towards uniformity. Despite education being to the fore on political agendas, robust schools and systems prove to be extremely resistant to radical change, because of the strength of the vested interests of the powerful stakeholders. Resource levels do not pass the thresholds that would allow longstanding criticisms of schools to be laid to rest or quality to be generally assured.

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New tasks and responsibilities are continually added to the remit of schools, in the face of the problems arising within the other core socialisation settings of family and community, causing schools' financial and human resources to be continually stretched. The norms of completed years spent by students in schools and initial education continue to go up, and the diplomas so gained are widely regarded as the main passports to the next stages of life (though in reality the links are more complex). Despite repeated policy initiatives, the educational inequalities that reflect unequal social and residential home backgrounds/environments prove extremely resilient.

... while performing fundamental tasks not always well recognised

While schools are continually criticised for being outdated and slow to change – accusations such as being excessively bureaucratic, with teachers wedded to traditional instruction methods – some inertia may simply be inherent in the nature of school systems. It may only be expected in societies that expect a great deal from schools, seeking to include all young people for ever-longer time periods with ever-fuller curricula, while being unwilling to invest on the very large scale that might bring about fundamental, as opposed to incremental, change. Societies,

Scenario 1

Attitudes, expectations, political support	Education, especially schooling, is politicised, and to the fore in party politics. Despite continued grumbling about the state of schools from parents, employers and the media, most are basically opposed to radical change. More positive attitudes held towards local than overall provision. Possibilities for "playing the system" are important in ensuring the continued support of schools by educated parents resulting in pressure for the greater exercise of choice.
Goals and functions	Much attention focuses on the curriculum, with many countries operating a common curriculum and assessment system – aimed at enforcing standards or creating greater formal equality or both. Formal certificates seen as main passports to economic/social life – but while increasingly necessary are increasingly insufficient. Larger relative numbers and greater diversity of "older young" in initial education as the norm continues of staying on longer and longer. Continuing inequalities alongside policy endeavours to combat failure.

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Strong bureaucratic character of schools and systems continues. Dominance of the classroom/individual teacher model, but some room for innovation and of developing schools as learning organisations. Increased ICT use in schools but not radical change to organisational structures of teaching and learning. Growing but patchy connections between educational and "non-educational" community uses of school facilities.	***Organisations and structures***
The nation (or state/province in federal systems) still the main locus of political authority but squeezed by: – decentralisation to schools and communities; – new corporate and media interests in the learning market and; – globalising pressures, including growing use of international surveys of educational performance.	***The geo-political dimension***
Highly distinct teacher corps, sometimes with civil service status. Strong unions and associations in many countries and centralised industrial relations. Professional status and rewards problematic in most countries. "Craft" models of professionalism remain strong. Growing attention to professional development (INSET), and efforts to retain teachers. This is partly in the face of major teacher supply problems, exacerbated by ageing.	***The teaching force***

including parents, may well prefer only gradual evolution in their schools. This scenario also recognises that schools perform many fundamental tasks (looking after children, providing protected space for interaction and play, socialisation, sorting and selection) that generally pass unnoticed compared with the obvious ones of imparting literacy, numeracy, disciplinary knowledge, and diplomas (Hutmacher, 1999). The question then is: "If schools systems were not in place for these purposes, what alternatives would serve them better?" Fragmentation in families and communities, the other settings in which children are socialised, reinforces the pertinence of this question (see Scenario 3).

New forces – such as ICTs or teacher crisis – may still break open the "status quo"

Yet, even if school systems are excessively bureaucratic and slow to create such dynamism themselves, there may now be developments in train that will force disruption to the status quo. Among the most important of these factors are the growing power of learners and parents as "consumers"; the impact of ICT in eroding established school and classroom boundaries; and a potential crisis of teacher supply. (These factors are reflected in the scenarios outlined below,

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including "extending the market model", "learner networks and the network society", and "teacher exodus – 'the meltdown' scenario".) It remains to be seen whether schools can accommodate such pressures, as they have many times before, or whether there will be major ruptures with the past.

Scenario 2: "*Extending the market model*"

- ***Widespread dissatisfaction leads to re-shaping public funding and school systems***
- ***Rapid growth of demand-driven "market currencies", indicators and accreditation***
- ***Greater diversity of providers and professionals, greater inequality***

Scenario 2: market approaches to schooling expanding significantly...

Trends towards more market-oriented schooling models – of organisation, delivery and management – are much closer to the experience and cultures of some countries than others. In this scenario, these trends are extended significantly in the face of widespread dissatisfaction with the performance of relatively uniform structures of public school systems and with existing funding arrangements to provide cost-effective solutions. In response to these pressures, governments encourage diversification and the emergence of new learning providers through funding structures, incentives and de-regulation, and discover considerable market potential, nationally and internationally. Significant injections of private household and corporate finance are stimulated.

... stimulating widespread innovation, but creating difficult transitions and widening inequalities

New market "currencies" of indicators, measures, and accreditation of both learners and providers flourish, while direct public monitoring and curriculum regulation decline. Public education, schools and the government role do not disappear, despite greater privatisation and more mixed public/private partnerships, though outcomes depend greatly on the funding and regulation regimes being introduced and may differ significantly between the primary and secondary levels. In an atmosphere of shake-up, innovation and imaginative solutions abound as do painful experiences of the transitions. Alongside the positive features of fresh thinking are the seriously

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enhanced risks of inequality and exclusion and of the public school system being relegated to "residual" status.

Dissatisfaction by "strategic consumers": impetus for market solutions

The development of a much more market-oriented model for schooling is likely to depend on a number of factors. It would be fuelled by a substantial sense of dissatisfaction with established provision among "strategic consumers", especially articulate-middle class parents and political parties, combined with a culture where schooling is already viewed as much as a private as a public good. Wide differences of educational performance would add weight to the criticisms, while the significant development of the "market model" in schooling would itself be supported by a degree of social tolerance of inequality. The nature of the teaching force could be a determining factor. A crisis of teacher supply (see Scenario 6) might well quicken the search for market-based models as it would for other alternatives. And, while a fragmented teaching force might be conducive to such changes through its impotence to resist them, a monolithic profession resisting innovation could conceivably produce the same result.

Entrepreneurial and political cultures' influence on schooling, but in which direction?

The business environment is likely to be highly influential, but in which direction is not necessarily clear-cut. On the one hand, more aggressive entrepreneurial cultures might be best for identifying new markets and approaches that break with convention. On the other, highly developed traditions of human resource development, with a deep understanding of "soft skills" and learning, might be needed to generate successful demand-oriented approaches of competence development, measurement and accreditation. Political tradition and government action would clearly be critical – in setting market terms, encouraging alternative forms of supply, permitting the exercise of demand. Its role would also be important in managing what could be a painful set of transition processes. Such responsibilities notwithstanding, this scenario assumes a diminished direct government role in provision.

Many existing market examples but how far should they be extended in schooling?

There is substantial interest in market approaches in some countries and quarters and many pertinent developments (hence this scenario is included in "The status quo extrapolated"). But, they cover a bewildering variety: the enhanced exercise of parental choice, including in some

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Scenario 2

Attitudes, expectations, political support	Significant reduced belief in the value of public education overall. Possible funding "revolts" by taxpayers. Divergent and conflicting positions expressed. Teachers' associations unable to resist moves to greater privatisation. A political culture develops that supports extended competition across many areas of social, employment, and cultural policy. The stability of new market solutions highly dependent on how well they meet perceived shortcomings.
Goals and functions	Different indicators and accreditation arrangements become basic to market operations; "efficiency" and "quality" are prominent criteria. Decline of established curriculum structures defined in terms of programmes and delivery, re-defined as outcomes. Alongside strong focus on knowledge and skills, values and attitudes – such as attitudes to risk, co-operation and hard work – may be prominent and hence recognised as outcomes. Market-oriented schooling may also, in response to demand, allow greater reflection of cultural/religious beliefs. Stronger emphasis on information, guidance and marketing – some publicly organised, much private. Substantial tolerance of wide inequalities and exclusion. Possible tendency for greater homogeneity of learner groups. Lifelong learning becomes the norm for many. Clear boundaries for "staying on" in school lose meaning in the face of diversified educational careers.
Organisations and structures	Privatisation, public/private partnerships, voucher systems, and diverse management are the norm. Individualisation and home schooling flourish. Greater experimentation with organisational forms. Many existing programmes disappear. Possible big differences emerge between the primary and secondary sectors, with market models more strongly developed at secondary level. Markets develop in childcare and culture, not just employment-related learning. ICT is much more extensively and imaginatively exploited for learning. Networking flourishes where tangible gains perceived by all parties; otherwise competition inhibits co-operation. Copyright issues acute.
The geo-political dimension	Substantially reduced role for central providers and public education authorities. They still oversee market regulation, but much less traditional "steering" and "monitoring". International providers and accreditation agencies become more powerful, but strong players, many private, operate at each level – local, national, international. Much more diverse set of stake-holders involved in educational governance. Funding arrangements, including absolute levels of resources, are critical in shaping new learning markets.
The teaching force	Less distinct teaching force, a wide range of new professionals with diverse profiles – public, private; full-time, part-time. Potential quality issues. The new "teaching professionals" in ready supply in areas of residential desirability and/or learning market opportunity. Otherwise, problems of shortages and speed of market adjustment. Flourishing training and accreditation for professionals to operate in the learning market. Transition problems until new markets become embedded.

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cases through vouchers; the involvement of the private sector in the running of schools or parts of systems; substantial household contributions for supplementary private tuition as in Japan or Korea, or for attendance at private schools (such as the oddly-named English "public schools"); the public funding of "private" institutions organised by particular cultural, religious or citizen groups; the corporate promotion of the e-learning market, and others. Is education a frontier on the point of being breached by the profit motive or is it so distinct that it will continue to resist? Much might turn on the *level* of education in question. Flourishing corporate initiatives in the ICT learning market at tertiary level, for example, stand in contrast with modest growth in schools. The further question then is about where the main boundaries will be drawn in the applicability of this scenario – between secondary and tertiary (in which case it would not be a schooling scenario as such)? Between lower and upper secondary? Between primary and lower secondary?

The "re-schooling" scenarios

Scenario 3: "Schools as core social centres"

- ***High levels of public trust and funding***
- ***Schools as centres of community and social capital formation***
- ***Greater organisational/professional diversity, greater social equity***

Scenario 3: schools as high status, community institutions providing bulwark against fragmentation

In this scenario, the school comes to enjoy widespread recognition as the most effective bulwark against social fragmentation and a crisis of values. There is a strong sense of schooling as a "public good" and a marked upward shift in the general status and level of support for schools. The individualisation of learning is tempered by a clear collective emphasis. Greater priority is accorded to the social/community role of schools, with more explicit sharing of programmes and responsibilities with the other settings of further and continuing education/training. Poor areas in particular enjoy high levels of support (financial, teaching, expertise and other community-based resources).

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Greater resource equality, experimentation, school autonomy, and shared roles...

Overall, schools concentrate more on laying the cognitive and non-cognitive foundations of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for students to be built on thereafter as part of lifelong learning. Norms of lengthening duration in initial schooling may well be reversed, and there is greater experimentation with age/grading structures and the involvement of learners of all ages. Schools come to enjoy a large measure of autonomy without countervailing central constraints, as levels of public/political support and funding have been attained through a widespread perception of high standards, evenly distributed, thereby reducing the felt need closely to monitor conformity to established standards. Strong pressures for corrective action nevertheless come into play in the face of evidence that any particular school is under-performing. There is more active sharing of professional roles between the core of teachers and other sources of experience and expertise, including different interest, religious, and community groups.

... help schools contribute to the development of social capital

Scenario 3 describes a strengthened, creative school institution available to all communities, meeting critical social responsibilities while silencing critics. This scenario fits a longstanding tradition advocating that closer links be forged between schools and local communities. More recently, such arguments have acquired an added urgency and relevance with the fragmentation occurring in many family and community settings, raising new concerns about the socialisation of children. In response to these concerns, the school could thus become a much-needed "social anchor" and constitute the fulcrum of residential communities (Carnoy and Kennedy respectively in Chapters 5 and 10 in this volume). In Chapter 1, we have seen that some analyses suggest that "social capital" may be in a process of erosion in a number of OECD countries to the detriment of individual well-being, society and the economy. In this scenario, the school is instrumental in arresting this trend, benefiting in the process from the positive impact on educational achievement of strengthened infrastructure and belief in the values upheld by schools.

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Scenario 3

Wide measure of party political and public agreement on goals and the value of public education; funding increases. High-trust politics with extensive co-operation between authorities, teachers, employers, and other community groups in relation to schools. The role of schools as centres of community activity/identify is accorded widespread recognition. Educated classes and media supportive of schools, giving them greater freedom to develop their own pathways as centres of social solidarity/ capital in different partnerships.	***Attitudes, expectations, political support***
The role of schools continues in transmitting, legitimising and accrediting knowledge, but with greater recognition and focus on a range of other social and cultural outcomes, including citizenship. More diverse forms of competence recognition developed in enterprises and the labour market liberate schools from excessive pressures of credentialism. The lifelong learning function is more explicit. Possible reversal of trend to longer school careers, but less clear-cut boundaries between school participation and non-participation. Inequalities reduced but diversity widens and social cohesion strengthened.	***Goals and functions***
Strong distinct schools reinvigorated by new organisational forms, less bureaucratic, more diverse. General erosion of "high school walls". Wide diversity of student body; greater inter-generational mixing and joint youth-adult activities. Sharp divisions between primary and secondary levels are softened; possible re-emergence of all-age schools. ICT is strongly developed, with particular emphasis on communication (by students, teachers, parents, community, other stakeholders). Networking flourishes.	***Organisations and structures***
The local dimension of schooling substantially boosted, supported by strong national frameworks, particularly in support of communities with weak social infrastructure. New forms of governance are developed giving various groups, enterprises, etc., a bigger role. International awareness and exchange is strong, but supra-national control is not, encouraging local diversity.	***The geo-political dimension***
A core of high-status teaching professionals, but not necessarily in lifetime careers. More varied contractual arrangements and conditions, but significant increases of rewards for all. A prominent role for other professionals, community actors, parents, etc. More complex combinations of teaching with other community responsibilities.	***The teaching force***

The scenario's demanding pre-requisites may be unrealistic

This future for the place called school would call for very major changes in most countries – more than would normally be feasible even over a 15-to-20-year time period. The scenario is predicated not only on important

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re-definitions of purpose, practice and professionalism, but also on the new definitions being widely endorsed by the main stakeholders throughout society. Generous resourcing would probably be called for, given the need for very even patterns of quality learning environments across all communities and for establishing high esteem for teachers and schools, though some of this might be attained through more cost-effective resource use. Greater flexibility of action would also be needed. If schools could rely on the existence of universal opportunities for continuing education and the certification of competences outside education, this would be a major step in liberating them from the excessive burdens of credentialism; in these circumstances such flexibility might well be more attainable. However desirable any of these prerequisites to this scenario may be, they are not necessarily very likely in the foreseeable future.

Closer ties to communities may widen not narrow inequalities

Furthermore, the problems relating to communities and social capital that make this scenario attractive could equally be the very factors that prevent it being fully realised. Far from equalising the effect of different socio-economic environments, the strategy of linking schools very closely with their communities might only serve to exacerbate the gaps between the vibrant and the depressed. Hence, without powerful mechanisms equalising resources and status, and without a strong sense of common purpose, the risk is that scenario would reflect, even exacerbate, existing inequalities between different communities [discussed in relation to "educational priority zones" (ZEPs) by Michel in Chapter III]. These problems would need to be overcome if the future is to lie with this radical form of "re-schooling".

Scenario 4: "Schools as focused learning organisations"

- ***High levels of public trust and funding***
- ***Schools and teachers network widely in learning organisations***
- ***Strong quality and equity features***

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Scenario 4: *most schools as "learning organisations" with strong knowledge focus...*

In this scenario, schools are revitalised around a strong "knowledge" agenda, with far-reaching implications for the organisation of individual institutions and for the system as a whole. The academic/artistic/competence development goals are paramount; experimentation and innovation are the norm. Curriculum specialisms flourish as do innovative forms of assessment and skills recognition. As with the previous scenario, all this takes place in a high-trust environment where quality norms rather than accountability measures are the primary means of control. Similarly, generous resourcing would probably be required, though there would be very close attention to how those resources are used in pursuit of quality. Professionals (teachers and other specialists) would in general be highly motivated, learning groups are small, and they work in environments characterised by the continuing professional development of personnel, group activities, and networking. In these environments, a strong emphasis is placed on educational R&D. ICT is used extensively alongside other learning media, traditional and new.

... and high levels of support, trust, and flexibility, and advance equity aims

In this scenario, the very large majority of schools merit the label "learning organisations". They are among the lead organisations driving the "lifelong learning for all" agenda, informed by a strong equity ethos (thereby distinguishing Scenario 4 from the two "status quo" scenarios in which quality learning is distributed much more unevenly). Close links develop between schools, places of tertiary education, media companies and other enterprises, individually and collectively.

But not typical of today's practice and with conditions hard to create

This differs from the previous scenario by its stronger "knowledge" focus that is well understood by the public and avoids the risk of ever-widening social remits making impossible demands on schools. It assumes strong schools, enjoying very high levels of public support and generous funding from diverse sources, as well as a large degree of latitude to develop programmes and methods. The teacher corps remains a more distinct profession, albeit with mobility and using various sources of expertise, than in the "school as social centre" scenario.

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Scenario 4

Attitudes, expectations, political support	Wide measure of party political agreement on goals and on the value of education as a "public good". Very high levels of public support for schools, including through funding where this is judged necessary. Care taken to ensure the gaps between more and less endowed schools does not widen learning opportunities. Educated classes and the media are supportive of schools, permitting an environment of freedom to individualise their programmes. High-trust politics. Schools work hard to maintain their supportive constituency and generally succeed in lowering "school walls".
Goals and functions	Highly demanding curricula are the norm for all students. More specialisms catered for (arts, technology, languages, etc.) but a demanding mix of learning expected of all students, including specialists. School diplomas continue to enjoy major currency, albeit alongside other forms of competence recognition. Innovative developments of assessment, certification and skills recognition for broad sets of talents. The lifelong learning function is made more explicit through clarification and implementation of the foundation role for lifelong learning. Extensive guidance and counselling arrangements. A major investment made in equality of high quality opportunities – overt failure considerably reduced by high expectations, the targeting of poor communities, and eradication of low quality programmes.
Organisations and structures	Strong schools as learning organisations with distinct profiles. Flatter, team-oriented organisations with greater attention to management skills for all personnel. Team approaches are the norm. Intense attention to new knowledge about the processes of teaching and learning, and the production, mediation and use of knowledge in general. Major new investments in R&D. Wide variety in age, grading and ability mixes, with more all-age and school/tertiary mixes. ICT is strongly developed, both as a tool for learning and analysis and for communication. Links between schools, tertiary education, and "knowledge industries" are commonplace – for INSET, research and consultancy.
The geo-political dimension	Strong national framework and support, with particular focus on communities with weakest social resources. International networking of students and teachers. Countries moving furthest towards this scenario attract considerable international attention as "world leaders". Substantial involvement of multi-national as well as national companies in schools (but close attention given to widening gaps).
The teaching force	A high status teaching corps, enjoying good rewards and conditions. Somewhat fewer in lifetime careers, with greater mobility in and out of teaching and other professions. More varied contractual arrangements but good rewards for all. Major increase in staffing levels, allowing greater innovation in teaching and learning, professional development, and research. Networking the norm among teachers, and between them and other sources of expertise.

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Many in education would regard this "learning organisation" scenario as highly desirable but at least two related sets of problems stand in the way of transforming the desirable into the probable. First, OECD analysis has shown that this model is very far from typical of practice in schools across different countries (OECD, 2000*a*). The scenario would thus call for radical breaks with established practice especially by and among teachers that, as discussed in relation to Scenario 1, could be extremely difficult to realise on a broad scale. Second, as with the previous scenario, the formulation begs questions of how to create a very supportive media and political educational environment, ensure such generous funding levels, and capture high status for schools and teachers where these do not already exist. Such conditions are far from being met in most countries at present, implying concerted strategies and investments to turn this situation around. Similarly, this scenario's equality assumptions are highly demanding, at the same time as socio-cultural and educational inequalities remain firmly entrenched. In short, this scenario remains a good way off, whatever the progress in particular schools and pockets of excellence.

The "de-schooling" scenarios

Scenario 5: *"Learner networks and the network society"*

- ***Widespread dissatisfaction with/rejection of organised school systems***
- ***Non-formal learning using* ICT *potential reflect the "network society"***
- ***Communities of interest, potentially serious equity problems***

Scenario 5: *institutions and systems dismantled...*

Whether schools are criticised for being too reflective of unequal social and economic structures, or insufficiently reflective of diverse cultures, or out of tune with economic life, in this scenario these very different sources of criticisms take firm root. Dissatisfaction with available provision leads to a quickening abandonment of school institutions through diverse alternatives in a political environment supportive of the need for change. This is further stimulated by

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Scenario 5

Attitudes, expectations, political support	Widespread dissatisfaction with the institution called "school" – its bureaucratic nature and perceived inability to deliver learning tailored to complex, diverse societies. Flight out of schools by the educated classes as well as other community, interest and religious groups, supported by political parties, media, multimedia companies in the learning market. New forms of private, voluntaristic and community funding arrangements emerge in tune with general developments towards the "network society".
Goals and functions	The decline of established curriculum structures with the dismantling of the school system. Key role for different values and attitudes. New attention comes to be given to "childcare" arrangements with the demise of schools. Some of these are based on sports and other cultural community activities. Hard to predict how far various measures of competence become the driving "currency". To the extent that they do, strong emphasis on information, guidance and marketing through ICT, and on new forms of accreditation of competence. Possibly wide inequalities open up between those participating in the network society and those who do not.
Organisations and structures	Much learning would take place on an individualised basis, or through networks of learners, parents and professionals. ICT is much more extensively exploited for learning and networking, with flourishing software market. If some schools do survive, hard to predict whether these would be mainly at the primary level (focused on basic knowledge and socialisation) or at secondary level (focused on advanced knowledge and labour market entry). Some public schools remain for those otherwise excluded by the "digital divide" or community-based networks – either very well-resourced institutions or else "sink" schools.
The geo-political dimension	Community players and aggressive media companies are among those helping to "disestablish" schools in national systems. Local and international dimensions strengthened at expense of the national. While international measurements and accountability less relevant as systems and schools break up, new forms of international accreditation might emerge for elites. Bridging the "digital divide" and market regulation become major roles for the public authorities, as well as overseeing the remaining publicly-provided school sector. Groups of employers may become very active if these arrangements do not deliver an adequate skills base and if government unwilling to re-establish schools.
The teaching force	Demarcations between teacher and student, parent and teacher, education and community, blur and break down. Networks bring different clusters together according to perceived needs. New learning professionals emerge, employed especially by the major players in the network market. These operate via surgeries, various forms of "helpline" and home visits.

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the extensive possibilities opened up by the Internet and continually developing forms of powerful and inexpensive ICT. The result is the radical de-institutionalisation, even dismantling, of school systems.

... and replaced by diverse learning networks as part of "network society"

What takes their place is part of the emerging "network society". Learning for the young is not primarily conferred in particular places called "school" nor through professionals called "teachers" nor necessarily located in distinct residential community bases. Much more diverse cultural, religious and community voices come to be reflected in the day-to-day socialisation and learning arrangements for children in the "network society". Some are very local in character, but there are also extensive opportunities for distance and cross-border learning and networking. The demarcations between the initial and continuing phases of lifelong learning come to be substantially blurred. While these arrangements are supported as promoting diversity and democracy, they may also bring substantial risks of exclusion especially for those students who have traditionally relied on the school as the mechanism for social mobility and inclusion.

Common ideas among futurists as a clear alternative to school-based approaches

Scenarios based around these ideas are among the most commonly proposed as "visions" for the future of schooling. They have the appeal of offering, for those in search of change, a clear alternative to the more school-based models outlined above. Scenario 5 can be understood as a feature of already-visible developments towards the "network society" (Castells, 1996), building on the potential of ICT to provide the means for learning and networking beyond time and place constraints. It is in tune with those messages of the broader lifelong learning agenda stressing flexibility, individualisation, and the role of non-formal learning. In relation to school-age learning, home schooling is growing and some predict this will quicken into the future, even if it is still relatively small-scale in most countries (Hargreaves, 1999). While sharing some common features with the "market model" of Scenario 2 , the driving force in this scenario is co-operation rather than competition, again appealing to those in search of alternative "post-industrial" paradigms.

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But is this scenario feasible or sustainable?

Yet, it also raises serious questions of feasibility and sustainability. How well would such arrangements meet the range of critical "hidden" functions, including of socialisation, that has made the school such a universal model and so resilient (as discussed under Scenario 1)? What would happen to those individuals and communities who are not active participants in the "network society" and who have low social capital? It is possible that this scenario would actually deepen the "digital divide" (OECD, 2000*c*). This scenario, therefore, also runs into potentially severe inequality problems, raising the prospect of government intervention in ways that would undermine the very distinctiveness of this scenario. Does it really provide a feasible scenario for the 21st century or is it instead proposing a return to 18th/19th century educational arrangements (plus the Internet)? Along with such questions about feasibility are those to do with stability/volatility – does it describe a "steady-state" future or a transition point calling for further transformation?

Scenario 6: *"Teacher exodus – The 'meltdown scenario'"*

- ***Severe teacher shortages do not respond to policy action***
- ***Retrenchment, conflict, and falling standards leading to areas of "meltdown", or***
- ***Crisis provides spur to widespread innovation but future still uncertain***

Teacher supply problems reach crisis proportions threatening "meltdown"...

This scenario can be regarded as an elaboration of a "worst case" in response to the question posed in conclusion of Scenario 1 – would the "status quo" survive were teacher shortages to turn into a real staffing crisis? This "meltdown" scenario comes about through the conjuncture of four main factors: *a*) a highly skewed teacher age profile resulting in outflows through retirement far out-stripping inflows of new recruits; *b*) a long period with very tight labour market conditions and general skill shortages resulting in severe difficulties both to recruit new teachers and to retain them in the profession; *c*) the upward shift in teacher rewards and/or staffing levels needed to make a tangible impact on relative attractiveness being viewed as prohibitively expensive, given the

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Scenario 6

Widespread public and media dissatisfaction with the state of education in the face of the teacher recruitment crisis and growing sense of declining standards, especially in worst-affected areas. Relative political impotence to address the loss from the teaching force given the scale and long-term nature of the problem and/or deep-seated cultural barriers to changes needed to set in train another of the scenarios. The education political climate becomes either increasingly conflictual or leads to consensual emergency strategies.	***Attitudes, expectations, political support***
Established curriculum structures under intense pressure, especially in shortage subjects. Where main response is one of retrenchment, examinations and accountability mechanisms are strengthened in a bid to halt sliding standards. Where the teacher shortage instead stimulates widespread change, major revisions of curricula undertaken – much more outcome- and demand-oriented and less supply- and programme-centred. New forms of parallel evaluation and assessment methods developed. Inequalities widen sharply between residential areas, social and cultural groups, etc. Affluent parents in worst-affected areas desert public education in favour of private alternatives.	***Goals and functions***
Very diverse organisational responses to lack of teachers. In some situations, there is a return to highly traditional methods, partly through public pressure in response to declining standards, partly because of large classes. In other situations, innovative organisational responses using different forms of expertise (including from tertiary education, enterprises, communities), and diverse mixes of lectures, student groupings, home learning, ICT, etc. Intensive use of ICT as an alternative to teachers; ICT companies very actively involved. Wide disparities again possible between highly innovative and traditional uses.	***Organisations and structures***
The position of the national authorities is strengthened in the face of crisis, as they acquire extended powers. It weakens, however, the longer the crises are unresolved. Communities with no serious teacher shortages seek to protect themselves and extend their autonomy from national authorities. Corporate and media interests in the learning market intensify. International solidarity improves between some countries where initiatives develop to "lend" and "borrow" trained teachers, including between North and South. Solidarity declines and protectionist responses increase the more generalised the shortages and where several countries are competing for limited pools of qualified staff.	***The geo-political dimension***
Teacher rewards increase as part of measures to tackle shortages. Conditions of teaching worsen as numbers fall, with problems acute in worst-affected areas, exacerbating the sense of crisis. Strenuous efforts made to bring trained – especially retired – teachers back into schools. Often only disappointing results, particularly where school politics and very conflictual and in areas of severe shortage. In some countries, the distinctiveness of the teacher corps and role of unions/associations increase in proportion to their relative scarcity. In others, established conventions, contractual arrangements, and career structures are rapidly eroded. As schools shorten teaching time, many posts created for semi-professional "child-minding". The market in home tuition flourishes, possibly with government subsidies to lower-income households.	***The teaching force***

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sheer numbers involved; and *d*) even when measures are proving effective, they require long delays before a noticeable effect results in greater numbers of practising teachers, making it still harder to break into the vicious circles.

... despite concerted policy measures

The scenario posits a staffing crisis in a context that differs in at least two important respects from that of the "baby boom" of the 1960s. First, the quality demands and expectations of students for extended educational careers have moved on substantially in forty years. Second, the attractiveness of school-level teaching as a career has declined against a continuing upward trend in the share of advanced-skill posts throughout the economy as a whole, posts that often enjoy greater rewards. This combination of factors comes together in this scenario in the form of a very serious crisis for schools, rather than assuming that the problems will always be "muddled through".

Reactions to "meltdown" differ, from conflict and retrenchment to innovation and cohesion

As the teacher exodus takes hold and the scale of the "meltdown" crisis is recognised, potentially very different outcomes could be part of Scenario 6. At one extreme, a vicious circle of retrenchment, conflict, and decline sets in, exacerbating the inequalities and problems further. At the other, the teacher crisis provides the spur to radical innovation and change, with different stakeholders joining forces behind far-reaching emergency strategies. Even in that more optimistic case, "meltdown" would not necessarily be avoided. In between, a more evolutionary response to the crisis might be that rewards and attractiveness of the profession increase leading eventually to reconstruction. Whether actions taken would allow another scenario to take the place of "meltdown" would depend critically on the room for manoeuvre permitted by social and political cultures.

Proven resilience of school systems, but also signs in some countries give grounds for concern

There are many uncertainties in this scenario, therefore, and its value in some countries may lie less in its predictive power and more in sharpening awareness of the possibility of severe teacher shortages and their consequences. Some might judge it to be unlikely given the proven resilience and adaptability of school systems: they would argue that some matching of teacher supply and

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Figure A.6. **Percentage of pupils, parents and teachers who think that the following proposals on how work in schools should be changed, are very good or quite good**
Compulsory basic school, grades 7-9, and upper secondary school, 1997

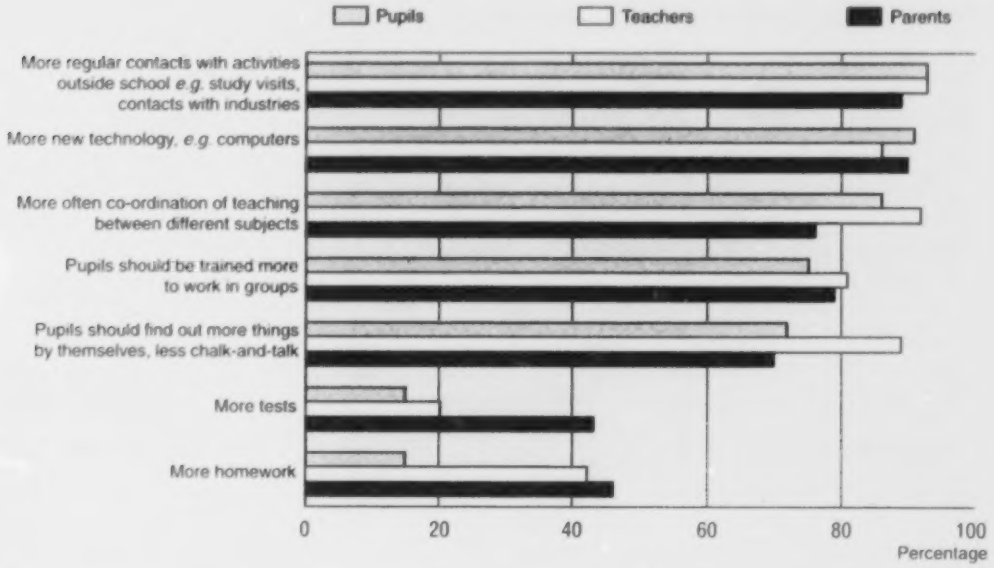

Figure A.7. **Should pupils get marks earlier in basic compulsory school?**
Views of pupils, parents and teachers, 1997

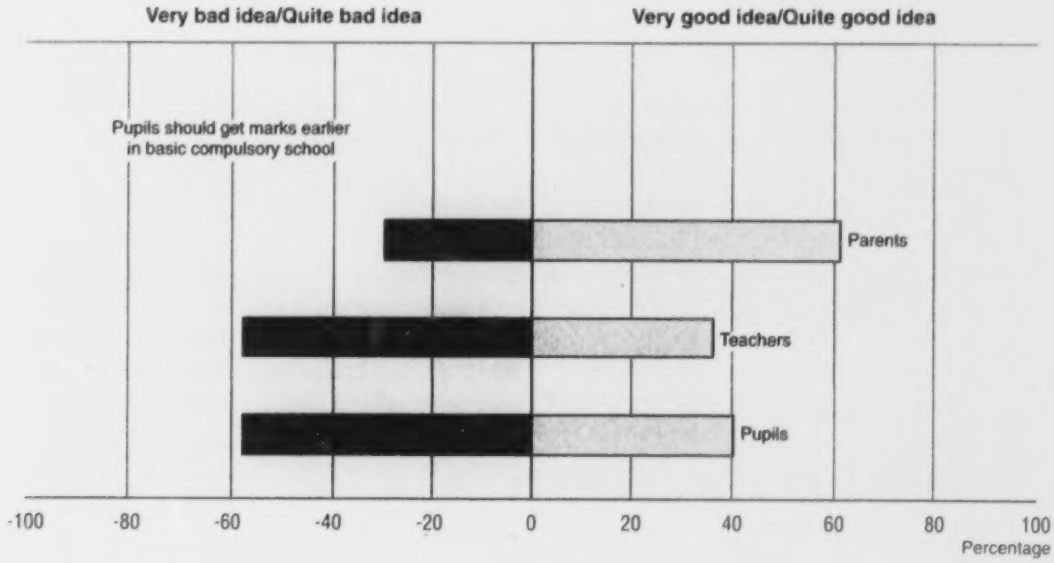

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Table A.1. **Proportions (%) of the public, parents and teachers considering that schools succeed (to a large or fair extent) to meet different objectives, 1993 and 1997**

	General public		Parents		Teachers	
	1993	1997	1993	1997	1993	1997
Developing competences						
Impart sound knowledge and skills	48	35	52	40	72	54
Encourage curiosity and initiative	31	20	37	31	43	34
Provide training in taking positions on ethical issues	26	15	28	19	36	30
The school's role in society						
Education of equal value	35	30	39	36	54	34
Support to pupils with special needs	34	21	37	25	34	17
Convey society's basic values	28	23	32	27	51	42

Table A.2. **General public attitudes towards teachers, 1993 and 1997**

Percentage of the general public agreeing with:	1993	1997
"Teachers are an exposed group"	58	62
"Teachers have too many privileges"	25	17
"Teachers should have more experience from working life outside school"	59	55

Table A.3. **Pupils' views of their teachers, 1993 and 1997**

Percentage of pupils who consider that all or most teachers:	1993	1997
– Have sufficient knowledge of their subjects	–	83
– Are committed to their subjects	73	77
– Teach well	58	67
– Care about what pupils think	55	60
– Can be trusted and turned to in confidence	43	48
– Make use of what students learn in their leisure time in school work	–	23

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Table A.4. **Parental views on school performance – Swedish schools in general and school which own child attends**

Percentages, 1997

		Very or quite well/good	Neither well/good nor bad	Quite or very bad
Child's school	What your child is taught in school	78	16	5
Swedish schools	Impart sound knowledge and skills	40	41	17
Child's school	Possibilities for child to get extra support/ help if needed	41	20	15
Swedish schools	Support to pupils with special needs	20	28	43

Table A.5. **Parents as "consumers" (want to) and "users" (feel able to): views in relation to choice of school and to influencing the possibilities for their own child to get extra support, 1993 and 1997**

Percentage of parents who very much or quite a lot:	1993	1997
Choice of school		
– Want to influence	70	70
– Feel that they are able to influence	40	41
Possibilities to get extra support for their child if needed		
– Want to influence	90	86
– Feel that they are able to influence	32	23

Table A.6. **Parental attitudes towards "a school for all" and private schools, 1997**

Percentage agreeing with the following statements

"School classes should be mixed, with pupils from different social and cultural background"	80
"More private schools is a good thing"	43
"Choice of school will lead to widening rifts in society"	53

Table A.7. **Factors influencing opinions on schools: percentage of the general public, parents and "non-parents" assessing factors to be very or quite important in forming their opinions on schools, 1993**

	General public	Parents	"Non-parents"
Experience of own child's school attendance	71	87	42
Experience of own time in school	63	61	66
Contacts at work with children or young people	50	54	45
Discussions with relatives and friends	33	32	35
National media (TV, radio and press)	35	32	39
Local media (TV, radio and press)	27	26	33
Statements from politicians	15	14	15

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Table A.8. **Opinions on schools among people of different political sympathies (the Left Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Moderate Party)**
General Public Survey, 1997

	Political sympathy		
	Left Party	Social Democratic Party	Moderate Party
Essential/very important for schools to...			
– Impart sound knowledge and skills	89	92	97
– Educate for the labour market	77	84	77
– Convey society's basic values	77	70	81
Schools succeed very well/quite well in....			
– Imparting sound knowledge and skills	36	43	32
– Educating for the labour market	28	33	13
– Conveying society's basic values	25	22	16
"Today's school is better than the school I attended myself"	34	55	31
Attitudes to public good/private good			
– School classes should be mixed, with pupils from different social and cultural background	85	84	70
– More private schools is a good thing	45	33	68
– Choice of school will lead to widening rifts in society	75	71	32

Table A.9. **The views of age groups on schools' success in meeting certain objectives**
Percentage thinking that schools succeed well or very well, or who don't know (DK), 1997

	Age group			
How well do schools succeed in giving...?	**18-25**	**26-45**	**46-64**	**65-74**
Knowledge and skills (very well/quite well)	44	32	33	25
Knowledge and skills (DK)	5	4	8	16
Education of equal value (very well/quite well)	37	30	25	22
Education of equal value (DK)	5	7	8	24
Giving support (very well/quite well)	30	21	16	14
Giving support (DK)	7	9	7	16

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Table A.10. **Percentage of the general public wanting more or fewer resources allocated to different tax-funded activities, 1993**

Percentages wanting to maintain constant resource levels are not presented

	More resources	Fewer resources
Schools	68	1
Health care	70	2
Care of the elderly	69	1
Police	57	2
Environmental conservation	54	3
Child care	45	6
Higher education	35	3
Social welfare services	26	17
Culture	18	21
Defence	9	44

Table A.11. **The views of age groups, parents, and those with no school children on the allocation of economic resources to childcare, school, and care of the elderly**

Percentages thinking that these activities should have more economic resources, 1993

Age group/parental status	More economic resources should be allocated to:		
	Child care	Schools	Care of the elderly
18-25	60	66	62
26-45	55	77	70
45-64	32	64	66
65-74	30	28	78
Parents	46	76	68
"Non-parents"	45	54	70

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Chapter 10

A New Century and the Challenges it Brings for Young People: How Might Schools Support Youth in the Future?

by

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Introduction

Young people across all societies attract attention from the older generation because of their behaviour, their likes and dislikes, and their general attitudes to life. The more they depart from what is seen to be mainstream, the more attention they attract. It has always been thus. Plato is often cited for his unfavourable attitude to a certain type of young man:

> "So he lives his life day by day, indulging each appetite as it makes itself felt. One day he is drinking heavily and listening to the flute; on the next he is dieting and drinks only water. Then he tries some exercise only to lapse into idleness and lethargy. Sometimes he seems to want to be a philosopher. More frequently, he goes in for politics, rising to say whatever comes into his head. His life lacks all discipline and order, yet he calls it a life of pleasure, freedom and happiness and is resolved to say the course" (*The Republic*, Book VIII, 561-d).

Less familiar perhaps are the parallel criticisms made of those who were to become the front line for the United States and her allies during World War II. Mortimer Adler outlined the views attributed to commencement speakers on the eve of the war as follows:

> "They all recognised a danger sign in the disaffection of youth, its distrust of any cause which spoke the language of principles. They argued against what they called the prevalent materialism, the single-minded self-interest of the college graduate's aim – to take care of himself and let the rest go hang, to get ahead in the world by beating his neighbour." (Adler, 1940)

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The post-World War II Baby Boomers, the generation "Xers" born in the 1960s and 1970s, and the current millennial generation, have all come in for their share of criticism. Youth rebellion, or at least adult perceptions of that rebellion, has a perennial quality about it. Any proper appreciation of this must take account of the conditions or contexts that generate the actions and reactions. Plato, for example, was particularly critical of "democratic" youth because of the views that he had formed on the dangers of democracy in Ancient Greece. The pre-World War II commencement orators referred to by Adler were alert to a new, foreboding political context in a society that just two decades earlier had been "made safe" for democracy. Contexts reveal the conditions in which young people find themselves at any particular time. The reactions of young people should be understood as a two-sided process – a reaction to particular conditions or contexts and as an active attempt to re-form those contexts in the light of aspirations and values.

An issue for educators today and tomorrow, therefore, is how should the conditions in which young people live be understood and with what significance should they be attributed. The relevant contexts include the economy and the labour market, and education and training, together with the different transitions between them. Within these broad contexts are conditions embedded in the social environment of young people that also exercise specific influences on them. They are in fact subject to multiple sets of influences, some of which are external to their control and others of which reflect more personal predilections. If the attitudes of young people, including various forms of rebelliousness, reflect structural conditions in the economy and society, it is more sensible to focus policy thinking on these rather than on the behaviours they produce. Such an approach cannot help but be linked to the role of schools and schooling as major contextual influences on young people.

Contexts and conditions of the youth landscape

Education, training and the labour market

Education and training are profoundly significant characteristics affecting young people. On turning 15 years of age, a young person can expect to spend, on average in OECD countries, another six years in education – a sharp average increase of 1.5 years since 1985. Graduates from tertiary studies are likely to earn substantially more than those from upper secondary education. There are thus considerable incentives to attain higher and higher levels of education. Where young people quit education after the lower secondary cycle, their earnings potential tends to be "between 60-90% of those individuals who have completed upper secondary education" (OECD, 2000*a*, p. 295; see also pp. 289-294). While income is not the sole measure of a rewarding life, the point here is that education and income will remain strongly linked in the future. Without high levels of educa-

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tion, young people will suffer severe constraints on the various life options available to them.

Access to and continuation in education and training are thus key issues for young people. Now, continuation to upper secondary studies has become the norm and enrolment rates across OECD countries at age 17 stand at over 80% (OECD, 2000*a*, p. 129). The significance of this figure can be appreciated when it is recalled that "in 1945 some 80% of the 14-year olds in Western Europe left school and joined the workforce" (Coleman and Husén, 1985, p. 21).

There are at least two major sets of issues for young people to highlight. The first is the real concern relating to the young people who do not continue in education and training. Worrying numbers are still early school leavers (up to 20% of teenagers in 1997), are neither in education, training nor a job (9% of the 16-19 age group in 1997), or leave with low level educational qualifications (25% of the 25-29 age group in 1997; OECD, 1999*a*, pp. 10-12). This not a new nor transitory situation. Coleman and Husén referred to similar figures and concluded, along with others in the 1970s and 1980s, that a "new educational underclass" had emerged, who were missing out on the increased access and opportunities brought with better education and training. It is not too much to argue that this "underclass" is now a permanent feature of the youth landscape. Policy initiatives addressing this underclass have abounded over recent decades (see *e.g.* OECD, 1985); unfortunately, the latest statistics only seem to confirm the structural nature of the problem.

The second set of issues, more or less closely related to the first, has to do with the nature of schooling in the 21st century. In around half a century, the provision of a full secondary education has moved from catering for an elite to mass provision. What should be expected of schools that are currently retaining students for longer and longer periods of time? What changes in structures, curriculum, pedagogy and teaching are needed to cater for a changing school population and new aims for education? Within these far-reaching questions what is clear is that a secondary education still geared for an elite is not what is needed as the context has changed dramatically. The pathways from mass secondary education are multiple, the school population is diverse, labour market requirements are shifting. Change rather than stability is the order of the day. Schools and schooling will remain structural features of the youth landscape but in future they will not serve young people well if they remain mirror images of institutions as they were in the past. (Further discussion of schooling implications follows below.)

It might be assumed from the foregoing that the possession of higher levels of education is a sufficient condition for formal labour market entry. Are the 80% or so of young people who stay on for upper secondary education in OECD countries automatically guaranteed a job? Any answer to this question cannot be based on traditional thinking and concepts about the transition from school to work nor

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assume that full-time permanent employment will be available in the future. What can be said is that education is a necessary but not sufficient condition for labour market entry. It provides the basis for further education and training and, if oriented in the right way, can provide skills and competences that will enhance a student's employability. The lack of a direct link between the possession of qualifications and employment is, of course, problematic for young people. It adds to the uncertainty that is already characteristic of adolescence and raises serious issues about the relevance of the final years of schooling.

Transitions from school to work are taking place later than was the case in the past: the transition is now likely to take place between the ages of 18 and 22 (OECD, 2000*a*, p. 12). In 1997, the unweighted OECD average for 18-year-olds in education and training but not employed was 56.3% while a further 18.3% were both employed and in education and training. 14.3% were in employment but not in education and training. For 22-year-olds, the corresponding figures were 25.4% in education and training but not employed, 11.1% in both, and 46.2% in employment but not in education and training. This has led one commentator to observe that "the 'young' are older than they were several decades ago" (Freeman, 1999, p. 92). This prolongation of the period of youth also means a delay in their independence, their "rites of passage" into adulthood, and their ability to contribute to society as active citizens. The economic indicators point to a deep structural issue for young people – their "coming of age" in a new economic environment.

There are other implications for this delayed "coming of age". In the broader social policy context, there is the issue of who should assume responsibility for young people who lack financial independence but who need to be engaged in education and training or active job seeking. Is this yet another parental responsibility? If so, how do young people in their early twenties deal with an extended period of dependence and how do parents manage an essentially "adult" family? How do young people in these contexts develop personal relationships outside the family when they are still dependent on their parents? Do the same social mores apply to adult dependent offspring as to young adolescent children? These are all issues centred around people's private lives but they also have ramifications for public policy. This is particularly so in those households where finances cannot be stretched to continue to provide for adult children, when the prolongation of youth may well generate further disadvantage.

Making the transition into employment is thus problematic for many young people: overall across OECD countries, "teenage and young adult unemployment rates are in double digit figures and were higher in 1997 than they were in 1979" (OECD, 2000*a*, p. 14). The transition from school to work for those with lowest attainment is especially problematic. One study comparing youth unemployment in France, Germany and the United States showed that young people with less than upper secondary education, experienced high levels of unemployment over

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a five-year period after initial education. In the case of Germany and the United States, those with both upper secondary and tertiary education also experienced significant levels of unemployment (OECD, 1999*a*, p. 80). As for the duration of unemployment (two years or more), the same study showed that this was clearly concentrated among the educational underclass. Higher levels of education may thus tend to shield young people from lengthy periods of unemployment, while for those with low levels of education, many are caught in a cycle that is difficult to halt without intervention. Either way, unemployment is a structural feature of the youth landscape with the potential to affect all.

Transition issues concern employment not just unemployment – the nature of work available to young people and their consequent remuneration. Young people do hold part-time jobs but no more than the population in general (OECD, 2000*a*, pp. 285-286). More will hold temporary jobs or contracts, however, relative to the rest of the population. Related are the levels of expected remuneration. Despite their increased educational attainments over the past two decades, there has over the same period of time been a "decline or stagnation in the relative earnings of young people" (OECD, 1999*a*, p. 16). However, this may change over time, at least initially the rewards may not match the effort required for successful entry into the labour market.

Thus, while the overall picture is neither rosy nor unrelentingly gloomy, prospects are not spread equally. For many young people, longer periods of time spent in education will pay off with a job and, possibly a career, but not without considerable effort and perhaps some experience of unemployment, temporary employment and/or low wages. For the educational underclass, on the other hand, jobs will be scarce and periods of unemployment will be lengthy. The transition to employment may never be made without further education and training. Yet, further education and training is only a necessary but not sufficient condition for embarking on a successful life course. Even those who attain well will need to be resilient and entrepreneurial.

Social conditions influencing young people

While the social conditions influencing young people are often difficult to grasp with precision, there is a body of evidence about today's youth landscape. The extent to which young people appear to be disengaged from traditional political processes has been well documented. Halstead, writing in *The Atlantic Monthly* about the so-called "generation Xers" has observed that:

> "A wide sampling of surveys indicates that Xers are less politically or civically engaged, exhibit less social trust or confidence in government, have a weaker allegiance to their country or to either political party, and are more materialistic than their predecessors." (Halstead, 1999, p. 2)

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These observations are supported by other international evidence. Hahn (1998) investigated students' political values and understandings in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[2] Students were asked to report on their levels of political trust, experiences and interest, their confidence and views on political efficacy and their future civic participation. The researcher's own words are unambiguous: "the questionnaire responses are quite dismal (...) the depth of students' political cynicism (...) is troubling" (p. 31). Results on the political efficacy and confidence scales were slightly more positive than on that of trust. Nevertheless, UK working class students, for instance, do not feel nearly as effective as those from private schools, suggesting a more pervasive problem of perceptions of powerlessness in democratic societies. Democracy is in principle for all citizens, including the young, yet their commitment to it may well be limited when its benefits are not obvious. As school-to-work and life transitions become more hazardous and complex, young people experience greater uncertainty and this may well be reflected in growing political cynicism.

The uncertainty affecting youth is also reflected in the evidence relating to youth suicide (though data in this area, particularly cross-nationally, are fraught with problems of definition and validity). In some countries, the trend is upward. For example, in Australia suicide among 15-24 year-olds rose from 11 to 17 deaths per 100 000 persons in the cohort between 1978 and 1998, and accounted for 25% of all deaths in this age group (Department of Health and Aged Care, 1999; see also Department of Health and Aged Care, undated, pp. 1-4). The incidence of male suicide in this group was more than four times higher than for females. A comparative study of suicide among 15-24 year-olds found a similar increase in suicides over time in Finland, and by 1995, there were 22.8 deaths per 100 000 (Fahnrich, 1998, pp. 13-14). When these figures are broken down by gender, they show 36.6 for males and 8.4 for females, a similar ratio to Australia. In Germany, also studied by Fahnrich, there has actually been a decline in recent times. In 1995, the overall youth suicide rate was lower than Finland's at 8.8 but the gender difference is still clear with a male-to-female ratio of around 3 to 1. It was higher still at 5 to 1 in the United States, while the overall youth suicide rate in 1997 was slightly higher at 9.5 per 100 000 (National Institute of Mental Health, 1999, p. 1). In New Zealand, the youth suicide rate increased sharply from 12.6 to 29.9 per 100 000 of the population over the 1985-1996 period, with 39.9 for males and 14.3 for females (New Zealand Health Information Service, 1997, p. 2). The existence of a universal trend towards increased youth suicide is questionable, as in some countries (*e.g.* Germany, Japan, and Switzerland) the youth suicide rate has actually decreased over the past decade. These cases notwithstanding, the data reviewed give serious grounds for concern for many countries.

What accounts for these data? Some researchers, consistent with the classic sociological tradition represented by Durkheim (1951), have linked structural

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changes in the economy and society to the increasing incidence of youth suicide (Hassan, 1990; Taylor, 1990). There are also psychological factors that appear to predispose young people to suicide such that sociological explanations alone are insufficient. Fahnrich (1998) refers to the interaction of risk factors that might contribute to or trigger suicidal behaviour, focusing particularly on depression, substance abuse and anti-social behaviour, and the breakdown of social relationships involving family and peers. These factors are similar to those identified by Hassan (1990): the general disillusionment of youth in a post-modern world, substance abuse and violence, breakdown in family relationships and mental health issues. How these factors interact for different individuals remains largely unknown; that they interact with often tragic results for some is only too well known. Hassan places emphasis on community responsibility, particularly to create conditions that will allow at least some suicidal youth to begin their lives afresh and with a sense of purpose. The policy message is the need to focus efforts on creating conditions that will assist, rather than exacerbate, the plight of suicidal young people.

The issue of suicide highlights other social conditions that are often present, if not pervasively, in the youth landscape. These include drug and alcohol abuse, changing family structures and relationships, increased violence both at school and in society as a whole, and juvenile crime. There are different national contexts shaping the nature and prevalence of these conditions but wherever they exist, they can affect a broad range of young people. What is more, they tend particularly to affect those young people who already suffer some form of disadvantage, excluding them further from general social resources and opportunities. Lack of parental resources, of educational qualifications, of supportive social networks, and of access to labour markets can all lead to dysfunctional social behaviour. Multiple forms of disadvantage reproduce social exclusion for many young people. Suicide may be among the most tragic outcomes, but there are many other dysfunctional processes from which young people may well have difficulty in extricating themselves. In most places, for instance, young people overtly break the law when they experiment with drugs and this can be "a first step in a spiral leading to more serious offences" (Council of Europe, 1998, pp. 17-18). They need to learn how to negotiate different social conditions in ways that have positive outcomes, but some will find this easier than others.

Learning to negotiate complex environments will be a key skill for young people in the future. Not all environments are externally imposed, and young people freely enter into some of them (as with so-called "youth cultures"). The latter often reflect young people's attempts to express their individuality and independence. There has been extensive theorising about the extent to which there are youth subcultures around single features such as music (Weinstein, 1994; Dotter, 1994; Kruse, 1993) or whether these are simply one aspect of the multiple ways in which young people learn to express themselves (McCracken, 1997). Whichever way it

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should be understood, a key point is that young people are more than capable of developing their own forms of cultural expression. In this way they are able to exert agency over the world and begin to shape it in ways that are consistent with their own emerging values. Young people thus live in the tension whereby they can be active creators of cultural standards and norms while at the same time subject to the pressures and processes of the mainstream.

Nowhere is this tension better illustrated than in the development over the past decade of the "dance party" or "rave party" as perhaps the most distinctive expression of youth culture (and the subject of recent academic attention; see, Thornton, 1995; Valentine *et al.*, 1998). The "rave party" represents a move from the narrow confines of the disco to much more open spaces with many more people to listen and dance to "techno" music and its many derivatives. For some, it represents the creation of a new community of the young where PLUR (peace, love, unity and respect) reigns in a TAZ (Temporary Autonomous Zone) in which "separate, self-governing events take place between the cracks of society's fabric" (*The Spirit of Raving*, undated). For others, it is a danger zone for young people – of prevalent drug-taking seen as normal activity. Whichever the viewpoint, rave parties are an international phenomena with avid, sometimes cult, following. The main point is that young people will develop, or at least strongly endorse, their own forms of cultural expression irrespective of adults' attitudes. Policy should be informed by an understanding of these forms of cultural expression, not so much in a moral-behavioural sense, but as a means of addressing what young people themselves appear to be searching for in a turbulent environment.

Characteristics of the youth landscape

If a "bird's eye view" were possible of the conditions of young people in the new century, what would it reveal? The following draws together schematically the issues that have been raised in the first section of the chapter, in the form of five characteristics defining the key features of the young person's future environment.

The features indicate the uncertainties faced by young people. Schools of the future will have to take them on board if they are to serve a positive and constructive role. Linear notions of smooth progression from one phase of life to another are no longer adequate. There is no formula for making easy transitions nor a single set of processes that will guarantee success, though in general young people will need to be better-educated, and more resourceful, flexible, independent and entrepreneurial in charting their life course. This will be easier for some to achieve than others, especially those young people who are already burdened with educational and/or socio-economic disadvantage. Schools will only be one, but an

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1. Later transitions to work and adulthood	Young people spend more time in education and training thus lengthening the period of dependence on parents and delaying their entry to the labour market.
2. The conditionality of education and training	Education and training are necessary but not sufficient for success in the future. Qualifications will not guarantee a smooth life course but without them, that course will be highly problematic.
3. The unpredictability of labour markets	Smooth transitions into the labour market cannot be expected and unemployment may feature in the lives of all citizens at some time. Getting a "foothold" in the labour market will be essential but may well be problematic.
4. The turbulence of the social environment	The potential for dysfunctional behaviour will be ever present, especially for those without qualifications and who suffer other forms of disadvantage. But for all young people, there will be risks to be negotiated. Basic institutions such as the family are undergoing rapid change that will impact on many young people.
5. The agency of young people	It is clear that while young people will have much to contend with in the future they also have the potential to create their own forms of cultural expression. This can be a positive feature of youth development, but it also has the potential to be negative and even destructive.

important, factor, that can positively contribute to their lives. How might they be reconfigured to do so?

Schools for tomorrow

A basic distinction to draw as starting point is between the aims of reconfiguring the processes of schooling and reformulating the basic functions of schools in society. The term "social anchor" has been coined to describe the function of schools in the market-oriented societies of the new century (Kennedy, 1999). In a fast moving, global and technology-driven society, schools must play an important role in providing stability for young people. This indeed remains their basic function in society. It does not imply that schools should remain as they are today or were yesterday. They must address the real needs of young people, recognising

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the main features of the youth landscape and designing learning opportunities and organisational structures around these.

Such schools will need to be characterised by attributes such as:

- Flexibility of structures and learning opportunities.
- Relevance of learning experiences.
- Explicit standards for expected student learning.
- Incentives for lifelong learning.
- Engaging teaching.
- Nurturing environments.
- Participatory culture.

These attributes will better cater for student populations growing up in an unpredictable social and economic environment. By providing a supportive and flexible environment that focuses on the changing needs of students, schools can be places of both stability and challenge for students. To attain these ends, four strategies are outlined in this section: *i*) the deregulation of the school curriculum; *ii*) the development of new community partnerships for schools; *iii*) the adoption of new forms of school organisation, including new approaches to the teaching profession itself; *iv*) the development of new pedagogies that recognise active learning as central to student development.

The deregulation of the school curriculum

The school curriculum is one of the few areas of school policy that has not been subject to deregulation in recent times. The opposite has been the case in many places. In Australia, England and Wales, New Zealand, and the United States, there have been concerted initiatives by national governments to ensure greater uniformity and consistency in the school curriculum. A study by Kennedy and Mills (1996) showed considerable similarities in curriculum provision across national jurisdictions. The reasons are not difficult to locate. The curriculum of schools represents a significant policy instrument affecting cultural formation, social cohesion and economic development. Its main function has been to prepare a skilled workforce committed to the nation and its objectives. High attainment in terms of school curricula has been a critical pathway for social mobility so that powerful support for the curriculum comes from influential parents as well as from politicians and policy makers. It is thus a courageous government that will make radical changes to the school curriculum.

A key characteristic of current curriculum provision is its static nature, with change tending to take place only at the margins. Despite important shifts in school populations, the nature of work, and social conditions affecting young people,

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the curriculum remains largely intact. This is as true in comprehensive as in dual systems. The basic assumption appears to be that one set of experiences is good for all students and groups of students.

This approach to curriculum will not serve students well in the future. New approaches need to be developed that are student-focused so that exactly the kind of flexibility required of students themselves will also be found in curriculum provision. In the secondary years, students will need to be able to move easily between at least four broad areas of study:

- Social and cultural studies (history/geography/civics).
- Literacy, numeracy and scientific studies.
- Vocational studies.
- Community learning studies (service learning and community oriented projects).

These headings simply indicate the broad contours and require considerable expansion to be operational. The school and classroom should not be the only sites of learning by students. There should be an easy movement in and out of school and learning acknowledged wherever it takes place. Students should not be tied to age/grade placement. They should be able to accumulate credit in relation to defined outcomes at times and in ways that suit their own particular contexts.

If students are to be flexible on graduation, they need flexible learning arrangements that build independence, decision-making skills, creativity, and a commitment to learning itself. Ironically, such an approach calls for more rather than less monitoring of student outcomes. Progress against expectations and goals would need to be assessed on a regular basis. A deregulated curriculum does not surrender responsibility: instead, it enables students to make choices and requires schools to know their students in more profound and meaningful ways. Such an approach would lay the foundations for lifelong learning. It would acknowledge that young people need to be prepared for a world in which their own initiative and ideas will play a fundamental part in determining their life chances.

New community partnerships for schools

If the school curriculum is to be deregulated, schools will need better and more extensive relationships with their communities. If students are to spend more time in the community, undertaking vocational studies and community projects and service, then close links need to be developed between the school and its immediate environment. Schools cannot continue to be like monasteries – the self-proclaimed learning centres of the industrial age. They must welcome

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community members onto their sites and open themselves up to genuine local involvement. There are numerous examples of successful practice that can show what is possible, and the literature on schools as sites for the delivery of integrated community services is growing (Dryfoos, 1992; Fredericks, 1994). The growth and spread of ICT offers the opportunity for schools to become community centres for Internet services, especially for disadvantaged groups. For schools to be focal points for lifelong learning under community governance is natural given the nature and location of capital investment in school infrastructure. In a sense, this is to reinforce a longstanding role of schools as integral elements of their communities.

Schools in the future, then, should be both in and of the community, enabling students to pass with ease back and forth in their learning journeys. They should not be seen as "sacred sites" where arcane and irrelevant knowledge is dispensed during the hours when students are prevented from engaging in more exciting activities. They should be the arbiters and facilitators of skills and knowledge that equip young people for life. Rather than forsaking the traditional cultural role of the school, this would be to enhance it in line with the new realities and conditions for young people. Schools should be where young people can grow and be nurtured, not so as to understand a world that has already passed them by but to be enabled to construct a world of their choosing for increasingly turbulent times.

New approaches to school organisation and the teaching profession

The above changes would all call for new organisational structures for schools. If they are to act as the hub of community-based learning they cannot be managed as hierarchical, single purpose, passive structures, accountable primarily to state bureaucracies and unconnected with the real world that their students live in. Management must be more outward-looking and governance more community-focused than it often is today, with strategic directions informed by contributing to the learning society.

Teachers in these schools will continue to nurture students but they should not be the only facilitators of student learning. There should be greater reliance placed on community resources to provide teaching and learning experiences for students. The teaching profession needs to broaden its base to admit others to play ancillary but important roles. There are very rich resources for learning in communities – other professionals, artists, gardeners, business owners and so forth – all of whom have the potential to help prepare young people for the future. Schools in the future must be structured in such a way as to facilitate this broad community participation. It is not an exaggeration to refer to "a new social partnership" for schools and their communities.

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At the same time, teachers will have a fundamental role in ensuring the much-needed stability or "anchoring" referred to above. Their part is critical in curriculum construction and the monitoring of student learning. They will guide young people into different experiences that meet their needs and aspirations, providing pastoral care and counselling. In all, the demands will be greater but so should the rewards as well.

New pedagogies with active learning at their core

How students learn is as critical as what or where they learn or who teaches them. The engagement of students in learning and their lifelong commitment to continue doing so must be key objectives for the future. The Internet both facilitates learning directly and offers a model or metaphor to help re-think learning as a more active and engaging process.

The Internet will undoubtedly play an increasingly important role in the lives of young people. It is unconceivable that it will not play a central role in schools and the community as a learning tool in the future. Young people tend to adapt easily to it and schools may be the only locations where equal access can be guaranteed. Computers need to be ubiquitous throughout schools and the community as do the staff to provide technical support. Software for real learning – not just drill, recitation and response – needs to be widely available. Students must be able to move easily back and forth between programmes, the Internet and more traditional learning resources as part of their daily work, work that is done creatively, independently, and at the students' own pace.

It is in this sense that the Internet offers a metaphor for pedagogy. It is open, accessible and full of potential. It permits access to information but leaves individuals to decide what is important. It facilitates communication across national and cultural barriers. It provides the conditions under which learning can take place but it does not construct it in any particular way. These need to be the characteristics of pedagogy in the future if students are to be really engaged and become committed to lifelong learning.

Conclusion

For schools to provide the "social anchor" for young people in the future cannot be achieved by reproducing the educational conditions of the past. Rather, they must take seriously the conditions that currently influence young people, acknowledging the turbulent and unpredictable lives they face. Schools do need to be reconfigured so that the life chances of the young will be enhanced. To achieve this represents a considerable challenge for policy-makers as the extent of the changes being suggested is considerable. Yet they are not necessarily greater in scale than other changes on the current public policy agenda. Schools

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were originally created in their current form to serve an industrial society and must inevitably change to meet the new challenges and directions pursued by governments themselves. Little purpose is served by pretending that the curriculum, school structures and personnel, and teaching methods that served the industrial state will well serve the knowledge society. Young people face fundamentally new challenges in the personal, social and economic dimensions of their lives. They need schools that fully recognise those challenges.

Notes

1. This chapter was completed during a study visit with OECD/CERI in Paris in Summer 2000.
2. A recent study using the same instruments has recently been completed using an Australian sample: Mellor, S. (1998), *"What's the Point?": Political Attitudes of Victorian Year 11 Students*, Research Monograph No. 53, Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Melbourne. The study confirmed Hahn's results.

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Chapter 11

Schools for an Emerging New World[1]

by

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Introduction

> "The most acute problem for people of our time is the tension between the global and local, and how it is expressed. In our modern democracies, we might have the impression that leaders think globally and citizens locally. This route would lead to the withering away of democratic debate, and to difficulties of engaging in dialogue among ourselves, even in political circles. How can a dynamic dialectic be established between the global and local? This must still be defined."

The aim of this paper is to consider this dialectic, as posed by Jacques Delors before the French Commission for UNESCO in 1997 (Brunsvick and Danzin, 1998), in its ramifications for schooling.

The virtual global village and a new regionalism and localism

Recent developments in our societies have seen the emergence of a planetary village, resulting from prodigious technological strides in communications, and a renaissance of regionalisms and local action. Viewed from another angle, globalisation, because of the risk it brings of soulless standardisation, can lead to fragmentation and a reduced sense of belonging to a wider community. The excesses of unbridled markets, in which prices and the market are more important than social and cultural relationships, are being met with a reaction of narrow nationalism, regionalism and parochialism. These threaten peace and raise the spectre of resurgent racism and intolerance. This is a first dimension of the tension between the global and the local. It is an important one in considering the aims of schools because, by educating citizens to be aware of these risks, they can shape the future of our societies.

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Another dimension is the new relationship between time and space that globalisation implies. It can thus be regarded as heralding a new civilisation. Instant network communications, the juxtaposition of the virtual with tangible reality, and the acceleration of scientific and technological change, are pushing towards the predominance of immediacy to the detriment of an appreciation of the longer-term; to zapping and surfing rather than the search for knowledge. The bywords of this short-termism are "mobility" and "flexibility". We are meant to put faith in the heuristic and self-regulation rather than societal visions; rapid reaction, not forward planning. Operating in virtual and ephemeral spaces erodes individuals' cultural reference points while fostering new forms of mobility and metageographical wandering.

All this provides new challenges for institutions, including nation-states, and also schools and other learning settings. As Paul Valéry once said of the age of the cathedral: "the time when time did not count has passed". We are contestants in a race that requires us rapidly to adjust in neo-Darwinian fashion to our changing competitive environment. The result is the worship of flexibility and reaction and the questioning of established traditions: planning, Taylorist and Fordist models of organisation, and the endeavour to manage economic and social change through centralised decision-making. Globalisation and its spirit of competition require finance on a massive scale and yet decentralised management – another example of the global/local dialectic. Public administrations are deemed anachronistic for being centralised and bureaucratic, for salvation now lies in decentralisation and the exercise of autonomy by players on the ground. Such infatuation with modernity, as an end in itself without any societal vision, is sustained by contemporary managerial discourse. This has invaded the private sector, and increasingly public services too including schools, and serves further to legitimise this seemingly inexorable if perilous process.

The process has led some, such as Le Goff, to denounce this as a new form of clandestine persuasion, a "gentle barbarity" (1999). In his view, worthwhile ambitions – autonomy, transparency, participation, shared projects – come at the cost of alienation, stress, and the denigration of culture and history. Such an assessment may seem harsh, but the issues are real ones. Managerial discourse in education, which has accompanied the development of a scholastic consumerism by parents and students (Ballion, 1982), has also been criticised by Johsua (1999) for reducing consideration of major societal issues simply to those of appropriate management instruments.

And yet, it is difficult to deny the value of new approaches to enhance effectiveness and transparency in education systems and the autonomy of practitioners in ways that reflect local circumstances and foster innovation. Local action and the revitalisation of citizen participation may be indispensable in forging social infrastructure now that the welfare state is in crisis. Echoing de Tocqueville,

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it may help to redefine the foundations of democracy in a world of growing complexity, one in which individuals come increasingly to claim the right to be different. He pioneered the subsidiarity principle for apportioning responsibilities across the different levels of decision-making – a principle now adopted by the European Union, as well as its member States in ways shaped by their different histories. More globally, as pointed out in UNESCO's 21st Century Dialogues (September 1998), the on-going third industrial and global revolutions have not led to the establishment of a new social contract (Mayor and Bindé, 1999).

New expectations for schooling

We have sketched the context in which new and often contradictory expectations have become manifest *vis-à-vis* schools, reflecting an awareness of the far-reaching transformations of our so-called post-modern societies (Michel, 1996*a*). A first set of transformations is the acceleration of technological change, especially in communication. This has a number of major consequences for the missions of schools, which now should:

1. Prepare students from an early age to accept change and the continuous questioning of what once was taken for granted in everyday life. This is not straight-forward as all of us need some constants to fall back on.
2. Cope with the accelerated obsolescence of knowledge and skills, implying lifelong learning for all and the continuous professional renewal of teachers and trainers.
3. Prepare students to question the results of change – rather than regard it as an end in itself – and to review science and technology critically in terms of their ethical and practical implications for the future. Rabelais's warning from the 16th century has never been more apposite: "Knowledge without conscience is but the ruin of the soul".
4. Integrate communication technologies effectively into schools. It is not sufficient just to invest in more computers, educational software and CD-ROMs, or Internet connections, to enhance learning. This is for reasons of equity as well as effectiveness: if schools remain aloof from these technologies, children from needy backgrounds will be at still more of a disadvantage compared with the more affluent families who are ICT-equipped.

The second fundamental transformation concerns globalisation. World-wide economic competition has a number of major consequences for education. To begin with, competition in knowledge-based societies hinges on productivity differentials that themselves reflect differences in human capital. Competition from countries with low labour costs compels the rich countries to move certain activities offshore and create jobs using advanced qualifications in high value-added sectors. Educational "malthusianism" is thus impossible: an increasing general

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level of education has become an economic necessity. As a result, there has been massive educational growth in all European countries, posing new challenges relating to mass education at the secondary and higher levels and exposing the inadequacy of the further training available for adults. Economic and social objectives converge in this regard. Key messages about quality – that competitiveness depends on qualifications and competence at all levels and not just among managers – is entirely consistent with the equity objective of combating the two-tier society in which individuals are excluded through lack of basic education and of functional literacy.

Globalisation calls for greater individual mobility, more flexibility, and the openness to work with partners having different cultures and codes. Communicating in the partner's language is increasingly useful. All this means that demands on education are growing and call for rethinking the current curriculum, which is still tailored to the earlier 20th century industrial society rather than the 21st century post-industrial, global world.

Despite the major growth of national education systems, a "process of creative destruction" as described by Schumpeter (1947) is leaving a growing proportion of excluded people behind, whole populations in the developing world as well as groups in developed countries. New social fractures have emerged, which are causing their own divisions in education, despite efforts to compensate for socio-cultural handicaps through policy approaches such as positive discrimination (AFAE, 1999). Many countries have witnessed rising youth unemployment and new forms of insecurity, poverty and exclusion. The situation is especially critical in big city suburbs, where a soulless urbanism exacerbates the sense of rejection by young people who have developed their own counterculture. This exclusion stems particularly from economic conditions, and from the erosion of established local support institutions and networks of solidarity, including the family.

Often, blame for this exclusion is laid at the door of schools, charged with failing in their educational and social duties. There is usually scant justification for these criticisms, as schools are often the only institution left in some areas as a last bastion against the breakdown of societal values. Yet, precisely because schools are seen as the last hope, criticisms tend to focus on them. This is especially difficult for teachers and other education workers when, in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, it is they who have engaged in collective hard work and innovation.

The new imperatives of effectiveness and equity

In a context of growing expectations and educational needs within limited budgets, school systems are hard-pressed to meet two major aims: boost their effectiveness and reduce social inequalities. Even if they might want to, the extent

220

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of change in the economic and social environment precludes schools from the option of simply continuing with the status quo. They must not only adapt but also lay the foundations for a future that respects a humanist understanding of social life and fundamental rights of the individual (Michel, 1994, 1996*b*). They must help to form critical, active citizens controlling, rather than being controlled by, technical progress, who can give meaning to individual and community life, uphold the planet's ecological sustainability, develop tolerance, and contribute to identifying genuine futures for society. The European Union may offer a favourable context to do this, given that it is a collective enterprise to build the future on principles and practices developed through genuine dialogue between different cultures yet which share fundamental reference values.

Acknowledging that schools must change does not mean that the direction, scale, pace or forms of that change are already clear. France, like its European partners, is confronting a range of fundamental issues in this regard that deserve the fullest possible democratic airing. Among these questions are:

- In a world of increasingly instability, including at the geo-political level, what are the most important missions for schools? There seems to be consensus around four of them:
  - the transmission of knowledge, specific and general;
  - the preparation for working life (not limited only to occupational training);
  - the development of personal skills and civic responsibility;
  - the promotion of equality of opportunity and equity.

  The consensus is less clear, however, in judgements about the relative importance of these different goals and how they can be pursued simultaneously.
- In the light of effectiveness and equity objectives, how to manage the growing diversity of students resulting from both mass education and new forms of social division? How to achieve unity without uniformity? How to diversify learning tracks and methods without falling prey to segregation? How far and for how long in the school cycles should there be the same educational track for all? These questions raise issues relating to "common culture", core curriculum and a "survival kit" of knowledge and skills for the 21st century, as well as how to construct different educational pathways and the most appropriate forms of student guidance for making choices between them.
- How to enhance the quality of the curriculum, and of teachers whose work is increasingly complex? What is the new professionalism of teachers, and of others who work in education, implied by the changing demands of schooling and the best use of information and communication technologies?

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- How far should decentralisation and the autonomy of schools be developed in order to foster innovation and change? What should be the role of the state and what mechanisms used to steer change? How can the objectives of a specific school be reconciled with those at the local, regional, national, and European levels, or even global-level objectives insofar as young people need to be prepared for international mobility and made aware of planetary issues?

These fundamental questions of steering change, and the optimal degree of decentralisation, are explored closely in this chapter, as they lie at the heart of tensions between the local and global. The relationship is also explored in the territoriality of education policy and the battle against inequalities through positive discrimination, as illustrated by the French policy of educational priority areas (*zones d'éducation prioritaire*, ZEPs).

Decentralisation and steering

Michel Crozier stated in 1979 that society cannot be changed by decree. Neither can schools. All countries have seen the limits of top-down reforms being reached, reforms that come and go as frequently as do ministers of education. Educational systems are complex and cannot be steered exclusively, or even mainly, from the top. Everywhere, initiatives are flourishing on the ground, although these too are not enough because they tend to be specific to individual schools and not easily transferred elsewhere. Local initiatives need to be combined with those coming from further up.

We have elsewhere analysed the sources of complexity in education systems and the need to search for new forms of national direction that allow greater local latitude, while preserving national control and hence coherence throughout the system (Michel, 1993). This is possible when education is considered a public asset that creates intra- and inter-generational externalities, including social relationships, and not just a private asset of human capital generating income flows during a person's working life. Joutard and Thélot (1999) have also emphasised the need for equal opportunity to accompany the diversification of successful educational tracks and of approaches to teaching and learning. This means increased autonomy for schools, yet within a national framework to limit geographical and social inequalities.

Greater leeway should be granted to schools and local layers of government to help foster innovation, better meet students' needs and make for a closer fit between schools and their environment. But, with the complexity that accompanies greater local autonomy, and assuming the need to retain a certain minimum unity and stability, a crucial element of the system's management becomes the rapid, effective circulation of relevant information to all involved. This is to underscore

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the principle highlighted by Prigogine and Stengers (1979): a system's tolerable complexity – before excessive instability sets in – depends on the speed that information circulates between all of its elements. Effective information flow is thus an important component of steering a decentralised system.

A second component is forecasting and forward thinking (termed "prospective" in French), the latter being more qualitative and longer-term. Education calls for a long-term approach and cannot rely only on short-term management. Students must be prepared for a world that will have changed substantially by the time they leave school. In light of the inherent inertia in schools and systems, major changes and competences for 10-15 years' time need to be factored in.

A third component is well-developed tools for assessing the cognitive and non-cognitive development of students, schools, and innovations, as well as for evaluating policy outcomes and the state of systems and their staff. A new culture of evaluation has emerged in the French education system, but much remains to be done.

The fourth component tends to be neglected but it is crucial for steering change: strategic communication. At all decision-making levels, system orientations and objectives need to be explained. Strategic communication gives meaning to daily actions; better still, it should underpin genuine co-ordination among all relevant stakeholders, extending as far upstream as possible. Strategic communication also means prompting, encouraging, facilitating, accompanying, co-ordinating, disseminating and enhancing the value of innovations, especially through cross-fertilisation by networks. Communication has an even more fundamental dimension: awareness of, and becoming able to live with, change in learning organisations.

The education system as a learning organisation, change as a systemic process

In a rapidly changing, multicultural world, necessitating adaptability and local autonomy, change depends on all the different levels of decision-making. This places a particular premium on overall coherence and on consistency between key objectives shared across all the levels. Steering the system in this context needs to transcend a mechanistic approach to educational reform. Instead, change should be seen as a collective adventure in which the educational enterprise is continuously re-inventing itself, which process implies accepting a degree of uncertainty. An apt metaphor for such change is of a living being constantly interacting with its environment. As expressed by Edgar Morin, the education system should be viewed as "self-eco-organising", whereby a set of actors and bodies are linked through extensive interchange (Morin, 1990). Through interaction with its environment, the education system can react, evolve, learn, create, and be *self-organising*. Change is thus a systemic, continuous and sustainable process of adaptation,

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and one reflecting the richness of local diversity. As national objectives must accommodate this source of diversity, the pace of change cannot be uniform.

The aim should not be the vain endeavour to attain a new equilibrium, in conditions of continual environmental turbulence. This turbulence renders meaningless the constant diagnoses of states of crisis and transition. As movement brings imbalance, then in a rapidly changing world all institutions, including schools, are always in some form of crisis or transition (Black and Michel, 1998). Instead, the search should be for the achievement of a dynamic stabilisation of forces that are out of balance.

Change as a systemic process also has to obey certain rules of consistency – between the global and local levels in moving beyond the tensions that are among the imbalances discussed above to be stabilised, as well as consistency in the directions taken by the system's innovations. Curriculum reform, for instance, that does not address the evaluation of student learning (formative and summative), pedagogical methods, and initial and on-going teacher training, is thus likely to fail. A similar example is the introduction of computers and ICT into schools, which will prove ineffective without corresponding organisational changes and initial and updated teacher learning.

Educational research emphasises the key role of the local level

Educational research has identified the need for "micro" analysis of how the educational system works to qualify macro-sociological findings, such as the theory of reproduction crystallised three decades ago (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1970; Baudelot and Establet, 1971). French studies have shown that mass education has had little general impact on reducing social inequalities, which have merely moved up to higher levels with expansion (Michel, 1999), but research has also identified the role of the educational system itself in generating inequalities, beyond any exogenous social determinism. In this, the local dimension is an important one (Duru-Bellat and Mingat, 1993).

French studies on the importance of the school effect (Dura-Bellat and Mingat, 1993; Dura-Bellat and Henriot-van Zanten, 1999; Cousin, 1993, 1996, 1998) agree with findings from English-speaking countries, Belgium, Spain and Portugal. Special attention has been paid to lower secondary schools (*collèges*), because of their role in guiding students towards one of the three upper secondary tracks (general, technological or professional) in *lycées*, and, within the general, between the literary (L), economics and social science (ES) and scientific (S) programmes. Despite official insistence that all these tracks and programmes enjoy equal standing as excellence takes diverse forms, hierarchies do in fact exist. There are major disparities among *collège* students' test results, based on evaluations at the start of the *lycée*, and in their attainments in national examinations in terms of

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graduation from the *collège*. There are also different patterns of evaluation, orientation and student profiles that have a major impact on educational careers and subsequent life-chances.

Such results argue for a clear focus on the local level, yet combined with caution about extending school autonomy too far. These disparities between the *collèges*, which also exist between *lycées*, can be used to argue for greater latitude being given to schools to operate competitively. The justification is that this will make them more accountable for their own performance and unable to claim that poor results are the result of bureaucratic constraints beyond their control. But, the risk is that this will merely accentuate a visible tendency towards "multi-speed" schools, whereby the best schools are the preserve of families rich in economic and/or cultural capital. The risk of widening the outcome gaps between schools is a real one. IEA international studies, including the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), have shown that whereas there is no correlation between level of student achievement and the extent of a country's decentralisation, the latter is associated with greater variance among students and schools. This spread has prompted countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States to strengthen their national curricula and standardised tests.

All countries are thus in search of the optimal level of decentralisation, as national authorities in the most decentralised seek tighter to reduce socio-geographic disparities and the most centralised, such as France, have devolved and decentralised for more than a decade. An OECD INES study on the locus of decision-making (conducted in 1993, repeated in 1998), also underlined the need to distinguish between school autonomy and decentralisation to the regional and/or local levels. For countries with the greatest degree of educational devolution are not those in which schools enjoy greatest autonomy – supervision from nearby is often more burdensome than supervision from afar. In light of this, should more power be given to schools or local authorities? But, deciding the desirable level of (de)centralisation, the powers to be kept or not by the state, or the best route for Europe-wide educational development cannot be resolved on purely technical grounds as the choice is above all political. It should be linked to an overall vision of society and of education within it.

How far to develop the territorial dimension in education policy?

France, as noted, has a long-standing tradition of centralisation in education. Political, economic and administrative centralism is an important dimension of what Braudel referred to as "the French identity". Colbertist, Jacobin, and later Napoleonic, traditions have left their profound stamp. The later 19th century Third Republic gave primary school teachers – the "black hussars of the Republic" – the task of integrating children from disparate provinces in which different languages

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were spoken (Alsace, Auvergne, Brittany, Languedoc, the Basque country, Provence, Savoy, etc.) or whose parents were immigrants. Integration was to come through the learning of French and civic and moral education, including love of nation and awareness of citizens' rights and obligations.

This French tradition of secular compulsory schooling aiming to unite people around a common language and set of values, has continued to this day. More traditional interpretations are now challenged by the multiculturalism and growing legitimacy of cultural and religious diversity, as well as by "political correctness", which have given rise to lively political debate. Such challenges and debates notwithstanding, awareness of the importance of schools in maintaining national unity, and scepticism about either the "communitarian" or the North American "melting pot" models, have meant that a large majority still support the republican notion of integration, albeit to varying degrees (Ferréol *et al.*, 1998; Schnapper, 1994; Wievorka *et al.*, 1997).

This political support has especially coloured the decentralisation and school autonomy debate, and it cuts across the traditional left vs. right political divide. The debate has been as much about the integrating role of schools as about the effectiveness or equity of the educational system. The French remain firmly attached to certain central prerogatives of the state. While the country has become decentralised and devolved increasingly since the 1980s, federalism is supported by only a small minority. The situation is thus quite distinct from that in Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom or Spain.

Nevertheless, social inequalities, insecurity and poverty, as well as the concentration of disadvantage in urban areas (especially big-city suburbs), prompted Minister of Education Savary in 1982 to embark on a major departure in education policy. It was innovative in at least two respects:

- For the first time, a public service applied a policy of positive discrimination. Certain categories of the population were favoured in resource allocation, rather than benefits decided individually in terms of economic or social parameters or educational merit.
- It was also the first time that geography was used as the criterion for allocating educational resources. This was an explicit acknowledgement of the importance of local context and was justified by the need for close co-operation between the different public services, families, social and economic partners, and local authorities in combating school failure.

This signalled a break with the traditional republican principle of formal equality of all citizens in accessing public services, implementing positive discrimination and enshrining it in law. This important step has shaped the possibilities for *local* considerations to emerge in education policy-making, including a specific rural education policy linked to broader planning to maintain primary

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schools or create secondary schools with small enrolments in areas threatened by depopulation and decline. A report in the early 1990s by the General Planning Commission called for "educational land-use planning". Schools that serve only small numbers but that are vital in their areas inevitably pose problems of effectiveness and equity, some of which could be addressed by the suitable use of the Internet and remote teaching. In the next section, however, the focus shifts from rural policy to that of *zones d'éducation prioritaire* (ZEPs), which contribute to managing the "dynamic dialectic" between the local and global levels.

From "education priority areas" to "education priority networks" (1982-1999)

Set up in 1982, the education priority areas (ZEPs) adopt a multi-faceted approach to combat school failure in geographical areas facing a variety of socio-cultural and economic handicaps. They aim both to improve academic achievement and combat social exclusion. This requires a comprehensive approach towards schools and their environment, hence the territorial dimension and the need for concerted action by educators and other administrative, economic and social players, aimed especially at families. The criteria for constituting ZEPs are both educational (proportions of students lagging behind, failing to advance to the next level, dropping out, and leaving with no qualifications) and demographic, social and economic (concentrations of low family income, foreign-born and minority populations, single-parent families, the unemployed, large family size).

Each ZEP, co-ordinated by a manager and advisor, is based on a strategic project setting out tangible, specific and measurable objectives, in turn derived from a close analysis of the local situation and of needs arising. Results are regularly assessed with objectives and procedures updated as necessary. An external audit every three years can prompt changes in how the boundaries of these areas are drawn and which schools are covered. The objective is to improve educational achievement through strengthened, diversified educational efforts focused on student needs. There is a strong focus on early schooling from the age of 2, differentiated pedagogical methods, extracurricular activities with community partners, academic support beyond the classroom, and health care and security. Teamwork, co-ordination across schools and ZEP projects, and tailored training for teachers and other school staff are all major factors making for success. Additional funding, staff bonuses, and career benefits can be gained in ZEPs. In 1998, there were 563 ZEPs in operation, involving 6 185 schools and nearly 1.2 million students (about 10% of total enrolments).

Despite the coherence of this policy approach, the periodic evaluations have shown only mixed results and hence they remain controversial. Some contend that the achievements made in narrowing the gap in test scores between ZEP students and the national average are relatively modest for the resources spent. Others argue that

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recent growing inequalities have led to greater concentrations of problems in ZEPs, further concentrated because of the drive to improve the match between ZEP boundaries and areas of greatest need. On the latter view, even a modest narrowing of the gap with national averages represents significant progress and, without ZEPs, would instead have widened.

An evaluation report has shown how some ZEPs work better than others (Moisan and Simon, 1997). Based on observations from many areas, they sought to identify the key factors of educational success. These were found to be consistent with the general findings of educational research, including the importance of addressing family attitudes towards education and the need to give priority to basic learning skills, including extracurricular activities to boost motivation. They also highlighted the key role of human resources and of evaluation and communication as mechanisms to help steer change.

Faced with the persistence of failure especially among the most disadvantaged students (as in other industrialised countries, see OECD, 1997*c*), the French government decided to organise a series of local forums followed by a national ZEP convention in Rouen in June 1998 (Assises nationales des ZEP, 1998). The conclusions that emerged from this round of discussions provided the basis to relaunch priority education. *Inter alia*, this was done by creating "education priority networks" (*réseaux d'éducation prioritaire*, or REPs) and defining "success contracts" based on ten priority guidelines (BOEN, 28 January 1999). The re-launch has been tied closely to urban planning policy, since a majority of ZEPs involve schools in such areas. REPs group schools together within narrowly drawn areas conducive to local influence, with most networks headed by a *collège*.

The REPs have helped to address geographical inequalities by integrating primary and lower secondary schools with special problems that were not before in ZEPs. This was needed because, as Charlot has emphasised (1999), they had gradually shifted from a "positive discrimination" to a "territorial differentiation" approach. Such differentiation is tantamount to creating and enshrining social inequalities and education ghettos. Certain schools can come to be stigmatised – shunned by middle-class families who would prefer to send their children to private schools than to those bearing the "ZEP" label. This only accentuates the handicap experienced by these schools – more targeted positive discrimination comes at the cost of increasing the ghetto effect, with all its attendant disadvantages in relation to effectiveness and social justice. Here again is a tension, even a contradiction, inherent in any policy based on sensitivity to the local environment and it suggests that there are limits to those policies that seek to reflect the territorial dimension.

Another perverse effect of territoriality and an expression of the tension have been analysed by Charlot (1994, 1999), Henriot-van Zanten (1990) and Johsua (1999).

228

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The growing autonomy of schools, the use of contracts, and new partnerships are causing contradictions to emerge at the local level whose sources (and solutions) are national, even international, and which threaten the very break-up of the educational system. Some, like Derouet and Dutercq (1997) and Dutercq (1999), have explored the relationships between the local and global in education through analysis of *governance*. This is especially relevant to the French situation, where a majority is still attached to the "republican school" (*école républicaine*) as a means to integrate diverse communities and mix different social classes. But, this does not mean that an essentially 19th century concept can be maintained into the 21st century – new interpretations are needed that are adapted to the contemporary context.

Local community, the nation-state, and Europe

Altogether, schools are now faced with an imposing set of tasks and responsibilities. They should educate students to be informed citizens, ready to act locally as the community is the main theatre of genuine democracy through which the nation can, as Rosanvallon suggests (1995), rebuild itself. They should reinforce solidarity in the face of a welfare state in crisis. They must "think European" in helping to forge a new political entity giving greater stability and peace in a turbulent world.[2] They should foster a universal outlook, because global policy-making will be the only way to address the challenges being faced world-wide, especially the environmental challenges. Furthermore, schools must prepare students for careers of ever greater mobility, adaptability, and openness to other cultures, at the same time as providing a sense of belonging and identity, which means acting to preserve local or regional cultures in danger. In other words, schools must help provide people with roots in order to build deeper foundations, enabling them to be more open to others and to diversity. Tomorrow, people will have to be both the Narcissus and Goldmund depicted by Hermann Hesse – the "troubadour of knowledge" whose "mind resembles Harlequin's coat", as described by Michel Serres (1991).

In contemporary France, the state's role is to be strategic at the same time as modest in renouncing a number of its traditional prerogatives, caught as it is between the emerging regional voice, a stronger Europe, and globalisation. In the middle of these movements, what is the future of the "republican school" so dear to the heart of the nation? Can it survive? There is much more involved in answering this than mere national or patriotic sentiment. It is secular and has been fashioned as the crucible of universal values, symbolising liberty, equality and fraternity, and the defence of human and citizens' rights. There are very few, even among the most fervent europhiles, who want to abandon the national education system. Just as the French respond to globalisation by putting themselves in the vanguard for "cultural exception", so are they also inclined to advocate an "educational exception". In continuing to build Europe, France's European partners will

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have to make allowances for the deep French attachment to this "republican school" in arriving in the future at the "dynamic dialectic between local and global" advocated by Jacques Delors. This does not mean the rejection of international outreach by schools, whether through increased exchanges or through pursuit of equivalence, even convergence, of diplomas and education systems, especially within Europe. The real fear is the disappearance of the "republican school" and its values in an increasingly market-dominated world.

Notes

1. This chapter, which is an abridged version of an article initially published in *Futuribles* (No. 252, April 2000), derives from the work of the international conference on Schooling for Tomorrow ("L'École Horizon 2020: Séminaire international de prospective de l'éducation") held at the Futuroscope (Poitiers, France) in October 1999. The conference was co-organised by EPICE and Futuribles International, in association with OECD/CERI, the European Commission (DGXII), the Conseil Général du Département de la Vienne, France, and the AFAE (Association française des administrateurs de l'éducation).
2. Surprisingly, Habermas (1998) does not refer to the crucial role of education in advocating this direction of development.

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Chapter 12

Visions of Decision-makers and Educators for the Future of Schools – Reactions to the OECD Scenarios

by

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Introduction

This chapter looks at the probabilities and desirabilities of different futures as perceived by some influential voices in education. The scenarios developed through the CERI/OECD "Schooling for Tomorrow" programme have been constructed based on certain trends in industrialised societies and a number of key factors in the current debate on schools. None of the scenarios is expected to emerge in "pure" form in any country. They serve, however, to raise the important question: "What is the likelihood that changes in the future will follow one particular direction rather than another?" The approach of this chapter assumes that these probabilities are importantly shaped in turn by the relative desirability of the changes outlined by the scenarios in the social forces within and around education systems.

Views expressed on the likelihood and desirability of the different scenarios

The scenarios offer an excellent means for structuring a debate on the future direction and development of schools and education policy. They have already been used for this purpose, notably during two conferences involving leading education officials, heads, teachers, researchers and representatives of the business world and civil society. One of these conferences held in Rotterdam was international in its participation, the other in Switzerland (St-Gall) had a more regional focus. At both conferences, the participants became familiar with the scenarios and discussed their implications.[1] They then completed a short questionnaire evaluating the likelihood and desirability, on a 15-20 year time scale, of each scenario.[2]

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In Rotterdam, around three-quarters completed the questionnaire, broken down as follows:

Decision-makers/officials	33
Researchers, consultants	20
Teachers, educators	14
Business	3
Students	3
Total	73

At the St-Gall conference, from around 150 participants, 100 completed the questionnaire, broken down as follows:

Decision-makers/officials	32
Teachers	25
School heads	23
Students	6
Business and trade unions	9
Other	5
Total	100

The Rotterdam Conference was a joint Netherlands/OECD event under the Schooling for Tomorrow programme. It was attended by approximately 100 delegates from 24 countries. Many participants were officials or policy-makers in their national education systems, experts, researchers, and a small number from the business community and students. St-Gall is a Swiss canton of 400 000 inhabitants situated to the east of Zurich, moving from an industrial to a knowledge economy. In August 2000, the education authorities organised a major conference on the future of their education system.

As these were only relatively small-scale surveys, only the main differences have been taken into account in comparing the results from the conferences. The participants were obviously not representative of the population as a whole, but their opinions are of interest because of their role in education, and their interest in education policy and the future of schools. They are well informed about these issues in general and have some, even considerable, influence in the education sector of their respective countries. Many leaders and experts are also former teachers who have been shaped by the dominant culture of schools and educational institutions. Though population, they are by no means statistically representative, these groups express the views of an informed and policy-sensitive section of the education community.

What are likely futures for schools?

Figures 12.1 and 12.2 show the distribution of replies according to how likely the participants assessed that each scenario would become reality.[3] In contrast

232

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Figure 12.1. **How likely each scenario would become reality – St-Gall Conference**
Likelihood (N = 100)

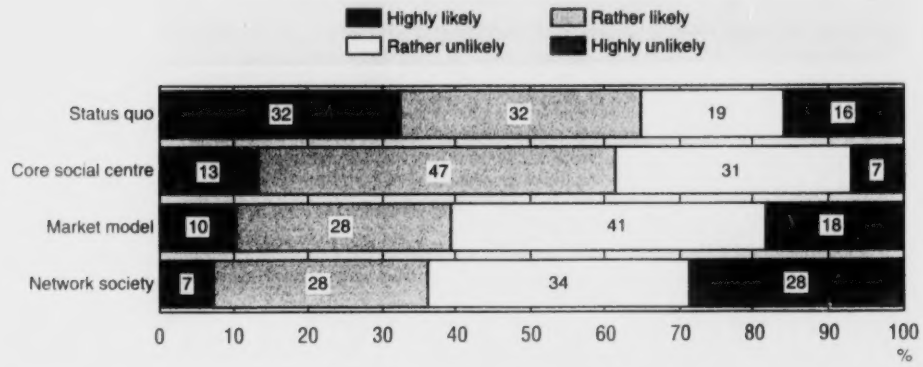
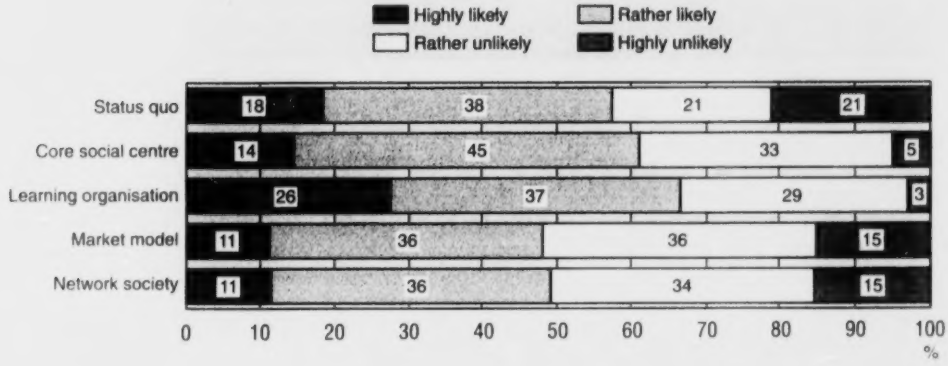


Figure 12.2. **How likely each scenario would become reality – Rotterdam Conference**
Likelihood (N = 73)



with an even spread of responses across the four options (highly or rather likely, rather or highly unlikely), the proportion of decisive replies – "highly likely", "highly unlikely" – is low and thus the share of "cautious" replies (rather likely or unlikely) is high. The non-commital, "on-the-fence" replies account for around 70% of responses for most of the scenarios. The inability to give decisive answers, whether affirmative or negative, underlines the sense of uncertainty many feel towards these issues. The one exception is the scenario "The status quo continues". In this case, one in three in St-Gall found this "highly likely" (though only one in six in Rotterdam did so), and the levels judging this "highly unlikely" were also fairly low: one in five replied in Rotterdam and one in six in St-Gall.

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Taking the decisive and cautious responses together, somewhat over half in Rotterdam (56%) thought that the status quo was likely to continue, rising to almost two-thirds in St-Gall. In other words, these informed, insightful players on the educational scene believe that 10-15 years is just not enough time to turn around institutional inertia and out-dated educational practices. Against this assessment of inertia, however, the highest proportions of affirmative replies (highly or rather likely) were given to the "re-schooling" scenarios: 63% for "Schools as focused learning organisations" in Rotterdam and 60% for "Schools as core social centres" at both conferences. Few considered these scenarios to be highly unlikely. Indeed, a quarter of the Rotterdam conference participants believed in the high likelihood of the "Schools as focused learning organisations" scenario. In contrast, only a third to a half of the respondents thought that the "de-schooling" scenarios were likely to occur, and these were considered to be "highly unlikely" futures by significant proportions.

What are desirable futures for schools?

Views about desirable futures are far more clear-cut, as Figures 12.3 and 12.4 illustrate. At both conferences, two-thirds of the respondents considered it undesirable for the "status quo" to continue, approximately half of these judging it highly undesirable – this from conference participants among whom nearly two in three believe that it will in all likelihood continue.

Just under half in Rotterdam and one-third in St-Gall thought the move towards the market model was likely, despite this being deemed undesirable by an overwhelming majority (three in four) of the conference participants. Over half rejected the market scenario as "highly undesirable" in Rotterdam, and a third did so in St-Gall.

Figure 12.3. **How desirable is each scenario – St-Gall Conference**
Desirability (N = 100)

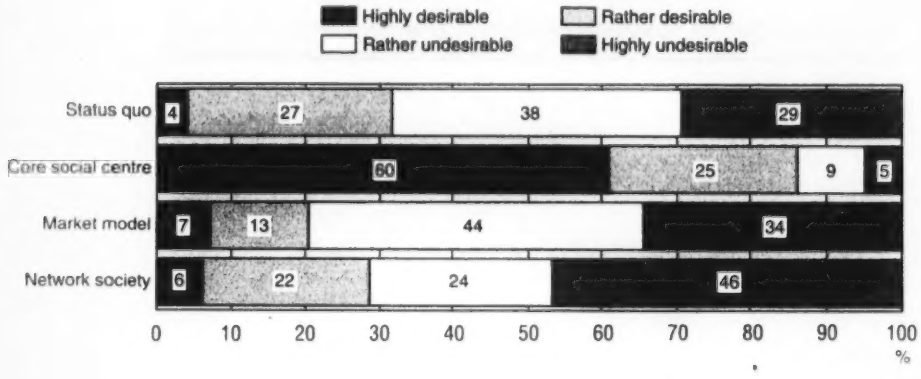

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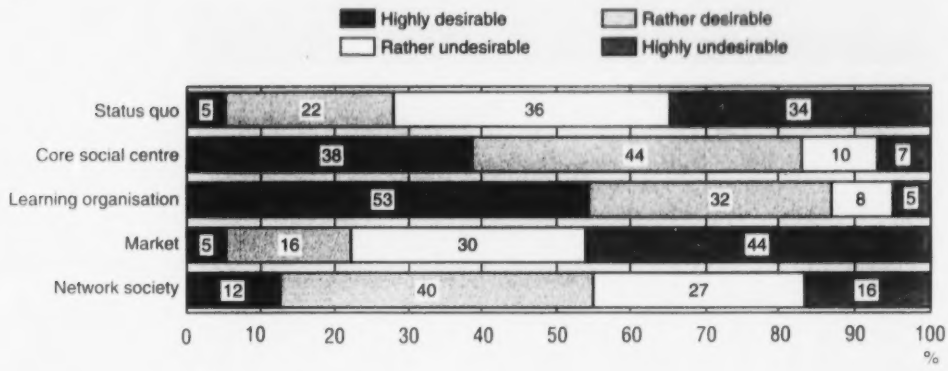
Figure 12.4. **How desirable is each scenario – Rotterdam Conference**
Desirability (N = 73)



There was a division of opinion among the Rotterdam participants over the desirability of the "Technology and the network society" scenario: half were in favour, half against. This differs from the results in St-Gall, where only a little over a quarter (28%) judged this scenario to be desirable. A possible explanation is that the impact and potential of ICT were discussed at far greater length at the international Rotterdam conference than at the St-Gall event organised within a national and local context.

The most desirable scenarios for these respondents were undoubtedly those described as "re-schooling". In Rotterdam, they were supported by more than four out of five, with over half even believing the development of "Schools as focused learning organisations" to be highly desirable. Only one of these two scenarios was included in the St-Gall questionnaire and this was supported by 85% of respondents.

Taking account of the slightly different profiles of the participants at Rotterdam and St-Gall, there seems to be rather similar reactions to the OECD/CERI scenarios. Two similar soundings on the scenarios have been done, in smaller and more homogeneous groups and using the same questionnaires: one at a seminar for union representatives of primary and secondary teachers (SER) in French-speaking Switzerland (N=16), and the other at a conference for managers from the Swedish Education Agency, Skolverket (N=17). They produced broadly the same likelihood and desirability responses.

Summary and discussion of the results

Summary

The findings from all these exercises are summarised in Figure 12.5. It shows the positive responses on both likelihood and desirability (though the negative

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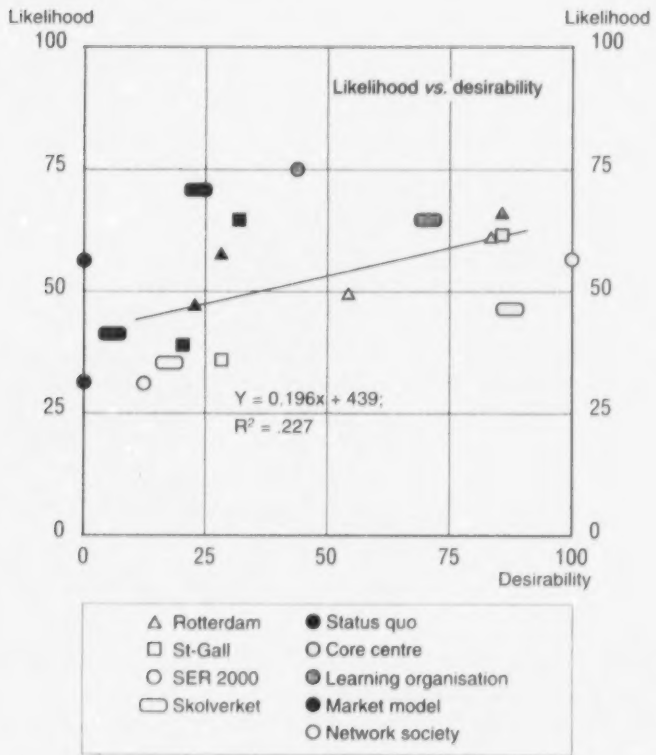
responses could equally have been used to show the same information), and the "highly" and "rather" replies have been combined. The events (Rotterdam, St-Gall, etc.) have been distinguished by different shapes and the scenarios by different shades of grey.

Some general patterns emerge from this summary overview:

- While opinions on likelihood (vertical axis) range across approximately 25% to 75% depending on the group and the scenario, views on desirability (horizontal axis) cover the whole range, from 0% to 100%.
- Opinions on each scenario tend to be clustered together, showing the general similarity of views about both likely and desirable future development. These can be summed up as:
  - "Status quo": likely but undesirable;
  - "Core social centre": likely and desirable;
  - "Market model" : unlikely and undesirable.

Figure 12.5. **Comparisons of likelihood and desirability scores at different events**



236 *Source:* Author.

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- At the three events where participants were asked about the fifth "Focused learning organisation" scenario (that was not included at St-Gall), they were in general agreement about its likelihood as high, but less agreed about its desirability. As for the "Technology and the network society"[4] scenario, the Rotterdam participants are clearly distinct from the other three, particularly in terms of believing this to be more desirable.
- Views on likelihood and desirability tend to correlate: broadly speaking, the more desirable the scenario, the more likely it is thought to be, as indicated by the trend-line. A similar matching is also found in the individual responses. Respondents are therefore relatively optimistic, considering desirable options to be likely and undesirable ones unlikely. There are two exceptions. At each event, the "Status quo" is thought to be notably more likely than it is desirable, while the opposite applies to the "School as core centre" scenario, which is considered more desirable than likely.

Dividing each dimension broadly in half gives four alternatives in terms of which most respondents judge the future scenarios as either likely or unlikely while desirable or undesirable, summarising the patterns already discussed:

	Desirable	Undesirable
Likely	– Core social centre – Focused learning organisation	– The status quo continues
Unlikely		– The market model – Technology and the network society

The two "re-schooling" scenarios are considered by many to be both desirable and likely, while the "de-schooling" futures are usually considered both undesirable and unlikely. Only the "Status quo continues" scenario is judged by most of those canvassed to be undesirable but reasonably likely to occur.

Discussion

The scenarios represent snapshots of what schools and educational institutions might become over the course of just under a generation. While presented in a sober, relatively neutral tone, few remain indifferent to the actual options they represent. Apart from ideas about their varying plausibility, they tend to arouse feelings of enthusiasm or rejection, or both. The scenarios project a picture, reminiscent of the inkblots in a Rorschach test. In similar fashion, reactions to them are revealing of the beliefs, hopes, apprehensions, and fears of those whose views are

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canvassed. Such reactions transcend managerial and professional rationality; they reveal more profound aspects of imagination and aspiration. This is especially clear in reactions to the desirability of the scenarios, but it is also visible in the correlation between views on desirability and likelihood – what people want tends to influence their worldviews of how futures will unfold.

Positions tend to be clear-cut when it comes to what people want. The "Status quo" scenario, based on a dominant bureaucratic system, is rejected but there seems to be little enthusiasm either for models driven by market forces, or for the one characterised by a diffuse network structure and the prominence of information and communication technologies. Respondents do not want schools to remain as they are (though they may fear that they will, if only through inertia), yet neither do they support de-institutionalisation or privatisation.

There is thus a clear preference for the two "re-schooling" scenarios. This might be called a return to fundamentals. At around 80% support, they clearly represent the "dream" schooling scenarios for those questioned. What do these visions convey? Briefly put, schools would remain in the public sector, operating in a largely consensus-based environment where funding is guaranteed, but where central government and education departments would play a different role. In contrast with the situation at present, they would be able to provide everyone with better access to knowledge as a public good but confine themselves to setting educational goals for schools through strategic medium-term targets and a general frame of reference and guidance. While education would be increasingly individualised, schools would keep the key collective function of providing a place of social integration at the local level. The acquisition of knowledge and skills by all would be of central concern but socialisation – passing on the values of community, democracy and solidarity – would be just as important. Reducing the social inequalities of education would be permanent goals of systems and individual schools.

"Re-schooling" would create a greater focus on individual schools while redefining their *modus operandi* and their role in the local community. In this way, the dream futures that emerge appear to be close to the Carnoy analysis of work, the family and the state, also in Chapter 5 of this volume. He identifies the need to revitalise communities corresponding to particular geographical localities, where the places for children's development also spontaneously connect up adults and indeed where elementary and secondary schools are able to become the centres for social connections at the neighbourhood level. It is this role that is especially distinctive in the Carnoy and the "re-schooling" dream scenarios, implying significant change from the status quo. Schools would be at the same time more autonomous and accountable, more open and connected to their immediate environment, and more overtly dedicated to it. They would embody a strong approach to local community infrastructure as institutions based on collective living and co-operative

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learning. While every school would be distinctive, they would be characterised by inclusive approaches to education and skill development for all students, and would re-organise themselves and reshape their procedures and practices to meet the ambitious goals they would be set. They would fully integrate ICTs and actively promote lifelong learning. In distinguishing between the two "re-schooling" scenarios, it would be useful to find out more about whether "schools as core social centres" is thought to be appropriate more for compulsory schooling, and "schools as focused learning organisations" for upper secondary and vocational institutions.

The similarities of likes and dislikes, despite the differences in participation and perspective, and in linguistic, institutional and political backgrounds, represented in these different events, should be underlined. Broadly similar attitudes to schools of the future were expressed at an international and a regional conference, a Swiss teaching union seminar, and a gathering of managers at the Swedish Education Evaluation Agency, some minor differences notwithstanding. This convergence suggests a shared culture and probably also similar interests in the stakes involved. Across different backgrounds and perspectives, the views reported here seem to express the attitudes of a particular group that could be called the informed and policy-interested section of the education community. While our samples are not representative in any statistical sense, these similarities across such different contexts suggest that other members of this informed and policy-interested community would reveal similar attitudes towards the scenarios if asked in still other events and settings.

Members of this community seem to agree with the need for change – they reject the "status quo" – but are sensitive to the problems that change would bring (and hence judge likely that the status quo will actually continue). They appear convinced that "re-schooling" represents the means to ensure the continuation of public sector schools meeting highly demanding quality standards. These findings are not entirely unexpected: the changes these respondents dream of would not reject traditional values, where schools are responsible for social integration, and their own interests are invested in the support of public education. Aspects of these scenarios are also in line with the management strategies pursued by many countries for a decade or so, with an emphasis on educational decentralisation, as illustrated by the four national forward-looking studies reviewed by van Aalst in Chapter 8. If there is a surprising element, it arises from the degree of consensus around a "renewed vision" for schools, especially among groups as different as educational administrators and teacher union representatives.

At these reported conferences and seminars, every feedback presentation on the questionnaire results elicited surprise; not so much at the findings *per se* but at the degree of consensus. To test the extent of this consensus, further exercises of this sort deserve to be repeated. The scenarios are admirably suited to stimulate

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a debate on schools of the future. Such surveys can reveal the extent of common visions and the discussion of these can then provide the basis for a more dispassionate debate on policy options than is often possible.

Nevertheless, there are limits to what can be extrapolated on the basis of these findings. They were generated within the relatively protected, non-committal setting of conferences or seminars. Without questioning the sincerity of the replies, there may well be gaps between what is said in such a context and what someone would be ready to do in practice. Supposing that these findings do accurately reflect the attitudes of the specific groups questioned, the latter represent only a fraction of the mass of those concerned by education and schooling. While they are of interest, as occupying influential positions in education systems with opinions that count in policy-making and change, they are still only a fraction, and indeed their aspirations may conflict with the interests and visions of other stakeholders.

Perspectives on the future

All this emphasises the value of the scenario method and indicates one avenue to explore when gauging the likelihood of a range of different scenarios for education systems. It is based on a simple assumption – that developments deemed likely and/or desirable have more chance of happening than those that most people think are unlikely to occur or are undesirable. This assumption remains to be verified, but it is not unrealistic.

This means that the question of the likelihood of the different scenarios becomes open to empirical treatment, and the issue turns to the best methods to be used to assess how likely and, more importantly, how desirable different stakeholder groups consider each scenario to be. As a next phase, it would be valuable both to refine the method and to broaden the stakeholder groups being surveyed, in order to bring in, for instance, teachers at different levels, pupils and students, parents, political groupings, and the business community. Do these groups differ fundamentally in their views on the future of schools or is there sufficient convergence that might permit strategic agreements and alliances? Ideally, the full spectrum of opinion should be tapped, and the resultant findings interpreted to take account of respondents' positions in society, especially their opportunities for proposing and imposing their vision of education. This approach would serve two purposes. It would, on the one hand, help to gauge the chances of any particular scenario becoming reality. It would, on the other, help clarify the policy debate about the timeliness, risks and opportunities involved in pursuing any particular main direction for schooling.

Broader still, such an exercise emphasises the value of a more culture-based approach to educational development. In democracies, the political support for schools – the first of the five dimensions around which the scenarios are constructed –

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ultimately depends on the judgements and opinions of the public at large. Hence, forward-looking analysis in the field of education will call increasingly for a better knowledge of mentalities, attitudes, expectations, values, aspirations and plans relating to schools and education, against the context of a wide range of settings and situations, now and in possible futures.

Yet, if done thoroughly, such an exercise would amount to little short of a cultural revolution for schools. Despite the ubiquity of pluralist rhetoric, educational institutions still function to judge the mentalities of their users as incorporated cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Every school has pupils who are "not cut out to be there" and who must either adapt or go under. In this respect, epistemologically, many schools place normative, even ideological, judgements ahead of knowledge, analysis and understanding. Considering that the mission of schools is to forge mentalities, it may seem surprising that the education world has always been reluctant to make any systematic effort to grasp the mentalities prevailing in society, their social and cultural rationales, their diversity and the changes that affect them. Yet, attitudes, expectations and visions – irrespective of whether they fit in with educational standards or even whether they are realistic – are very revealing of how pupils, their parents, and the public at large regard schools and education policy, and ultimately of how people will vote.

It is also worth noting by way of contrast the very high degree of attention focused by businesses and the media on the perceptions, expectations, aspirations, even imaginations, of their clients, and increasingly of their staff too, as part of their business and marketing strategies. There is a much better grasp in these sectors that confidence stems in some measure from beliefs, images and opinions. They have adapted a sophisticated range of social science concepts and methods in order to measure attitudes and to follow, even anticipate, change, as part of product development or communication strategy.

Education systems in some countries may be moving in this direction, as Söderberg suggests in Chapter 9 of this volume. In Sweden, available data have made it possible to chart trends on a number of opinion parameters over the past decade. For instance, during the 1990s, the public's confidence in schools tended to decline but to a lesser extent than it did in relation to other public institutions. Drawing on international data obtained for the INES project (OECD, 1995), Söderberg points to broad public approval for demanding educational objectives set for schools but the relative lack of confidence in their capacity to fulfill them. What is more, the degree of confidence does not necessarily relate to the actual performance of the education system compared with other countries. This points to the potential role of communication strategies to address such misperceptions.

Yet, trends in public opinion may be paradoxical. For instance, parents are generally more critical about schools in general than about those attended by

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their own children; those with higher levels of education, who have gained most, also tend to criticise the education system more (Söderberg in Chapter 9; Hutmacher and Gros, 1994). Hence, we need a much better grasp of the complex mechanisms that shape opinions on education, across diverse settings, situations and lifestyles, as well as of the growing individual and collective stakes at issue in educational institutions. We need to develop the conceptual base and refine the methodologies, capitalising on the experiences already gained and the expertise available across different countries.

Notes

1. The scenarios evolved as part of the "Schooling for Tomorrow" programme. At the time of the St-Gall Conference, the scenario entitled "Schools as focused learning organisations" had not yet been constructed, and hence was not included in this survey. Since both conferences, "the market model" has been re-classified and a new scenario added in Chapter 3. In earlier versions of the scenarios, the "market" scenario was considered as an example of "de-schooling", while above it has been shifted under the "status quo" umbrella, and a sixth "meltdown" scenario has been added under "de-schooling". Which is more convincing depends importantly on the starting point of each country in terms of political/social culture and on the level of schooling.
2. The concepts of "likelihood" and "desirability" were not defined or discussed in any detail, so that the answers given were based on personal, rather spontaneous criteria. There were four possible answers for each criterion:
   - highly or rather likely; rather or highly unlikely;
   - highly or rather desirable; rather or highly undesirable.
3. The "don't knows", who accounted for less than 5% in every case, have been discounted.
4. Retitled as "Learner networks and the network society" in this report.

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